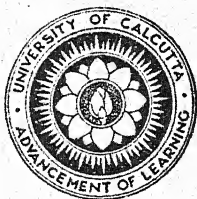


A STUDY OF ŚĀṆKARA

BY

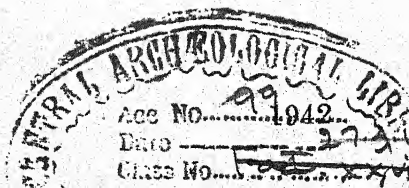
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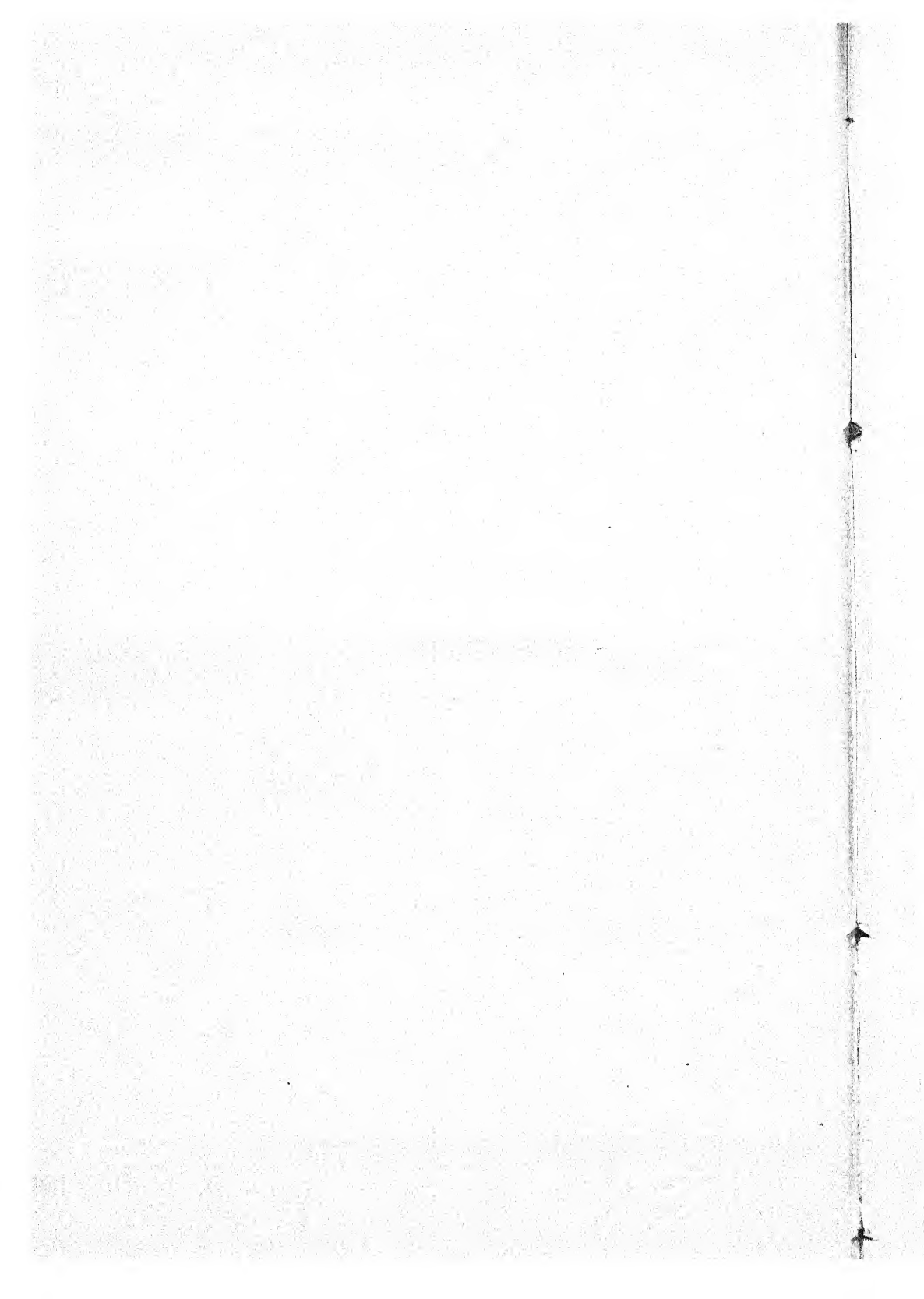
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**Dedicated
to the Sacred Memory of.**

**The Late Sir ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE, Saraswati,
Sastravachaspati, C.S.I., M.A., D.L., D.Sc., etc.**

*than whom a greater patron of
learning can hardly be conceived*

As a Token of Gratitude



PREFACE

When yet a child, my grandmother made me repeat a formula thrice whenever a lonely star was sighted in the horizon in an evening. She began with a query—"How many eyes between you and me?" to which I was to answer—"Four eyes", and she would conclude saying—"In the domain of Truth, one eye only, my darling." I cannot now remember if my unsophisticated grandmother understood the inner significance of her words. But it became apparent to me, when I grew much older and was taking my lessons in the Upaniṣads when my grandmother was no more, how deeply the doctrine of "One without a second" had taken root in the commonest soil of my country. It had shaped our festivals and religious rites, and coloured our prejudices and even superstitions.

Of all the exponents of this doctrine, Śaṅkara was by far the most rational and independent, and the system that he evolved has been the most engrossing topic of discussion amongst scholars, both ancient and modern. All these criticisms, however, have not always been friendly, for prejudices die hard and misconceptions are apt to arise amongst students of other systems with preconceived notions.

An incentive to the study of Śaṅkara's philosophy, in comparison with other philosophies of the East and the West, first came through an advertisement of the Calcutta University for the Sreegopal Basu-Mallik fellowship in 1925. But, owing to other pre-occupations very little progress could be made for several years. To give a comprehensive view of Śaṅkara's philosophy and to clear the misconceptions about the Great Savant by quotations from his own writings which are prolific, and lastly to establish his rightful place amongst the great thinkers of the world by comparing his views with those of others, demanded wholehearted devotion and tremendous

labour which I was not able to bestow upon the task for a considerable time. When, however, the lectures were ready, the fellowship was suspended, as it remains still today. These lectures, therefore, are now re-arranged and published in a book form divided into six chapters, dealing with the source, method, ontology and epistemology of Śaṅkara's doctrine comparatively with those of others, and a conclusion giving a short *résumé* of the whole book.

In writing out the chapters, I have made use of many books which, I hope, have all been acknowledged in their proper places. Besides this, I have added at the end of each chapter, a short bibliography (not meant to be exhaustive) giving only the list of books I could consult.

In transliterating Sanskrit or Pāli words, the following letters and diacritical marks have been used in the body of the book—For short vowels—a, i, u, ṛ, ḷ; for long vowels—ā, ī, ū, ṛ; for Guṇa and Vṛddhi vowels (diphthongs)—e, o, āi, āu; for consonants—k, kh, g, gh, ṅ

ch, chh, j, jh, ñ

t, th, d, dh, n

t, th, d, dh, n

p, ph, b, bh, m

y, r, l, v, h

ś, ṣ, s; and ṁ, ḥ for Anusvāra and Visarga.

Conjunct consonants have been indicated by the English letters for the components coming one after the other, except in the case of *ch* and *chh* where *cc* has been used for simplicity.

In the footnotes, however, no diacritical marks have been used; any aberration from the normal value of a letter has been indicated by italicizing the letter, except in the case of ś which has been transliterated there by 'sh'. Thus, for ṛ, ḷ, ā, ī, ū, ṛ, āi, āu, ṅ, ñ, t, d, n, ṁ, ś, ḥ, italics have been used without any diacritical marks.

Something about the pronunciation of these Sanskrit and Pāli words should be said for non-Indian readers. The vowels are mostly as in German or Italian, except short 'a' which has the sound midway between 'o' and 'u' in 'not' and 'nut'. The guṇa vowels 'e' and 'o' have the long sound of 'ā' and 'ō' in 'fate' and 'note'. The consonants are mostly as in English : 'g' is always hard, 'ch' has the thin sound as in the initial 'ch' of 'church', the cerebrals *t*, *d* etc. are pronounced much as the English so-called dentals, the dentals *t*, *d* etc. are true dentals pronounced like those letters in French. In the case of the aspirates *th*, *dh*, *ph* etc. the sound is a stop plus a simultaneous aspiration, *ś* has a palatal sound and cerebral *ṣ* is pronounced like 'sh' in English.

This book could not have found the light of the day without the help of one of my nearest relatives, Mr. H. Banerji, I.C.S., who has actively looked through its completion. My son, Mr. Manoj Mukherji, M.A., B.L., has prepared the index and my student, Mr. Kshitish Chandra Pal, M.A., has verified all the Sanskrit quotations.

CALCUTTA

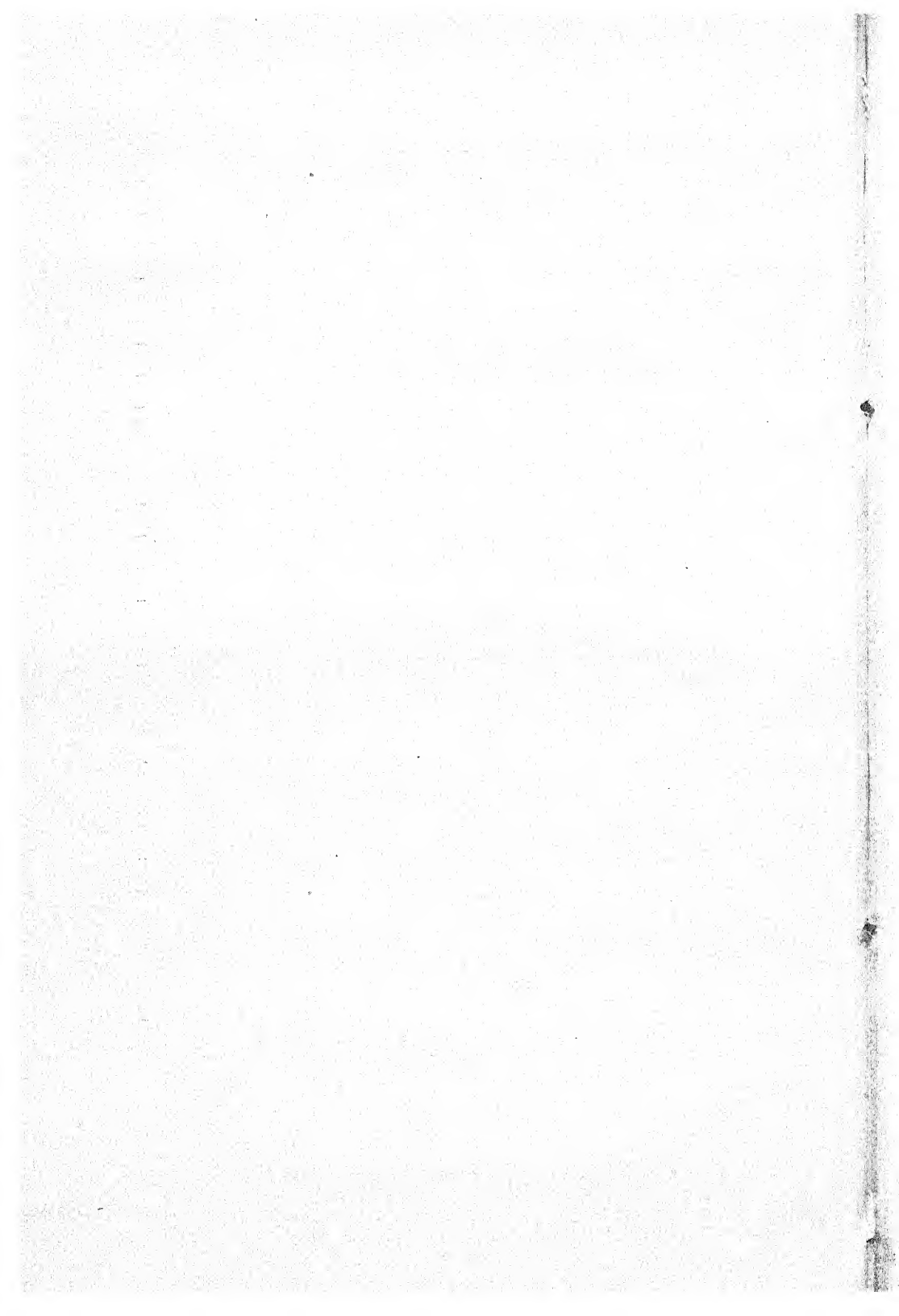
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A STUDY OF SĀṆKARA

CHAPTER I

India's Search After Truth

SECTION I—GROPING IN THE DARK

1. How wonderful must this world of ours have seemed to Man at the first dawn of his consciousness! How bewildered he must have felt at the phenomena around him—the day and the night, and the storm and the thunder and the rains! Yet he had no experience to fall back upon, to contrast and to compare! But as this panorama unfolded itself before his eyes, his curious mind must have stood expectant till he could compare and have a relative view of the events with the aid of his memory, and could be thus for the first time engrossed in thought.

2. It must have been a long time in the history of Man before his questions took a definite shape—before, in stead of looking to the future in eager expectation as he was wont to do, he was turning towards the past looking for the cause, so that he might be more accurate in his expectations. And a much longer time must have elapsed before man could think of this Universe as a totality and ask for its cause or causes. The primitive Man transformed all around him into an enchanted world and ascribed divinity to every object of his wonder and admiration and fear. The Gods to him were a kind of idealised humanity, similar though infinitely superior to man, invested with immortality, jealous of their power and possession and exacting the most perfect loyalty of man, whom they were ready to punish at the slightest displeasure. But with the growth of the moral conscience in man, the idea changed, and wise and just Gods were conceived in place of the quarrelsome and envious Gods of old. Homer's Gods reflecting the physical exuberance of the youthful Hellenic nation were transformed into the Gods of Pindar, Æschylus and Sophocles reflecting the sense of the good and the beautiful. Gradually Reason with its natural tendency towards unity, and observation of the constant regularity of

events and phenomena led man to conceive of a Will superior to the caprices of the Gods, of an immutable Justice, of a Supreme Intelligence, of a divine Law.

3. In Europe, the idea started in Greece with the question, 'what constituted the primordial natural force—the Principle,' from about 600 B. C., when Thales declared water to be "the first Principle—the universal substratum, of which the other bodies are mere modifications." In India, it is difficult to indicate with any degree of certainty the different stages in the development of thought. But it is certain that long before the redaction of the *Rgveda* in its present shape, or even long before the composition of its hymns, the Indo-aryans had outstripped the primitive simplicity of thought and had developed the conception of Gods as forces behind the natural phenomena. It is therefore that the question that man has asked in all ages and in every clime has found expression in the hymns of the *Rgveda* not its primitive simplicity but with the timeless and universal moulding that the vision of a poet or seer could give it.

कोऽज्ञा वेद क इह प्रवोचत् कुत आ बभूव
कुत इयं विसृष्टिः ।

Rv. I. 30. 6.

Tr.—Who knows truly ? Who can say here, aye, whence it becomes—whence is this emission *i. e.* creation ?

The question presupposes a comprehensive view of the universe as a totality which accounts for the singular number in बभूव, secondly the notion of the source or the final cause (कुतः), and lastly the idea of reality (अज्ञा) as distinct from appearance in the domain of knowledge.

4. The Gods in the *Rgveda* therefore, who originally must have been conceived of from phenomenal objects, have been transformed into noumenal beings or activities, immeasurable and all pervading. Each of them is necessarily the energy behind all creation, and their activities manifest themselves in identical incidents in the hymns of the *Rgveda*. *Indra*, *Soma*, *Sūryya*, *Agni*, *Viṣṇu*, *Varuṇa*, the *Aśvin* twins, and even the dual Gods *Indrā-Soma*, *Dyāvā-Prithivī*, *Mitrā-varuṇa*, all create

the worlds, separate the earth and the sky, spread out the space and fill it up, cause the luminous substances—the fire—the sun—and the lightning. A host of them are conceived of as 'giving milk to the udder of the 'cow' and 'killing 'Vṛtra'. Goodness is their nature and they free us from sin. Each of them is conceived of as the first and highest* energy capable of manifesting itself in all diverse forms (*Viśva Rūpa*). Each, therefore, has often been praised in terms and names of the others, leading on to the idea of unity—

यो देवानां नामधा एक एव ।

Rv. X. 82. 3.

यो देवानामधिदेव एकः ।

Rv. X. 121. 7.

Tr.—The One who is the holder of the names of diverse Gods.
The One transcending God of gods.

इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहु-

रथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।

एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति

अग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ।

Rv. I. 164. 46.

Tr.—The one Fire (energy ?), the scholars express in many ways,—they call him Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, and also that golden-winged bird (the Sun). They call him Agni, Yama, and Mātariśvan.

Plurality rests on words merely (वदन्ति, आहुः, बहुधा) as is later expressed in the Upaniṣads वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयम्, "The change is a mere matter of words—a name." Chh. Up VI. 1. 3-5.

सुपर्णं विष्णुः कवयो वचोभि-

रेकं सन्तं बहुधा कल्पयन्ति ।

Rv. X. 14. 5.

Tr.—The scholars—the poets imagine the good-winged (the absolutely free) one Being in diverse forms by words merely.

*Max Muller calls this Henotheism and considers that the idea of God and divinity in the modern sense was not yet born. < vide 'Origin of Religion', Lecture VI. >

The manifold universe is already reduced to one principle—a cosmological unity,

एकं वा इदं विबभूव सर्वम् । Rv. VIII. 58. 2.

Tr.—It one indeed became all (manifold).

And the *one* personal God (masculine)—

(यस्यैतजो बहुधा कल्पयन्तः
सचेतसो यज्ञमिमं वहन्ति । Rv. VIII. 58. 1.

Tr.—Whom the knowing priests imagining as manifold carry on the sacrifice),

identified with the cosmological unity, is reduced to one spiritual principle (neuter). At the end of a Kalpa, it is said—

न मृत्युरासीदमृतं न तर्हि
न रात्या अङ्ग आसीत् प्रकेतः ।
आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं
तस्माद्धान्यन्न किञ्चनास ॥

Rv. X. 129. 2.

Tr.—There was no death then—no immortality either ! No night—nor awakening morn ! That One breathed without a breath in his self-power, there was nothing else beyond him.

Here the idea of absolute unity and self-activity (energy) is more clearly defined. The one Being is the centre the very essence of the universe.

अजस्य नाभावथ्ये कर्मर्षितं
यस्मिन् विश्वानि भुवनानि तस्थुः Rv. X. 82. 6.

Tr.—In the nave of the Unborn is placed the *One* on whom all the worlds rest.

He is said to be the Divine Law—the one divine Truth "ऋतम्"* (singular) identical with all fires (energies)—with the Sun and the air, the priest and the guest, with that dwelling in man (in-

From 'ऋ' to join or to go. Hence ऋतम् joined, and gradually 'fixed', 'settled' or 'what is gone i.e. has actually occurred' hence 'a fact', and gradually 'truth'. But see Max Muller's Origin of Religion, Lecture V. pp. 245 etc.

dividual) - with that dwelling in a circle (collective man ?), with that dwelling in truth, with that dwelling in the sky (sound or speech ?)—with the fire born in water—with the fire born on earth—with the fire born in truth—with the fire born of flints.

Rv. VI. 40. 5.

And in the Puruṣa Sūkta Rv. X. 90. 2., it is declared with unmistakable clearness—

पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यम् ।

उतामृतत्स्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति ॥

Tr.—This universe is the Puruṣa, the Divine being alone—the universe that was and that will be in future—and he that grows in food (the mortal man) is in reality the possessor of immortality.

But the common people cannot comprehend this. They fondly cling to the knowledge they derive from their senses as real. They regard as real, as is said in Ath. V. X. 7. 21., not the stem but “the branches that conceal him.”

असच्छाखां प्रतिष्ठन्तीं परममेव जना विदुः ।

These branches are what he is *not*—are unreal—a transfiguration (*Māyā*). This self-transfiguring activity of the *one being* reduces him, as it were, into the creator—the Hiranyagarbha—the personal God of the religions—on whom the whole universe stands as “the spokes of a wheel on a nave”, as it is said in Ath. V. X. 8. 34.

यत्र देवाश्च मनुष्याश्चारा नामाविव स्थिताः ।

अपां त्वा पुष्पं पृच्छामि यत्र तन्मायया स्थितम् ॥

Tr.—Where Gods and men rest like the spokes on a nave—I ask you of that flower of water (the creative consciousness which is the *soul* of the nebulous matter) wherein the Supreme Being is lying by his *Māyā*.

5. The idea of *Māyā* as a self-transfiguring activity is already developed in the hymns of the R̥gveda, as for instance—

रूपं रूपं मघवा बोभवीति

मायाः कृण्वानः तन्वं परि स्वाम् ।

त्रिर्यद्विः परिसुहृत्तमागान

मन्त्रैरनुतुपा ऋतावा ॥

Rv. III. 53. 8.

Tr.—The bountiful God (*Indra*) is transformed into many forms spreading out his transfiguring activities on his own self that he might come three times from the aerial region in a moment through the *Mantras*—not (really) drinking (the *soma*) in time, he becomes the acceptor of sacred works. And again :

रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव

तदस्य रूपं प्रतिचक्षणाय ।

इन्द्रो मायाभिः पुरुरूप ईयते

युक्ता ह्यस्य हरयः शता दश ॥ Rv. VI. 47. 18.

Tr.—An image of all forms, he becomes all forms. That form of his is for appearance (only). Indra (the great god) assuming many forms by his transfiguring activities moves about. The horses attached (to his chariot) are ten hundreds (innumerable).

That the term *Māyā* in these verses of the *R̥gveda Saṃhitā* was understood in the above sense as early as the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* may easily be conjectured from its employing the very clause इन्द्रो मायाभिः पुरुरूपमीयते in II. 5. 10., in a similar sense. It is no doubt true that the introduction of the term in a purely technical sense into philosophy took place comparatively late i.e. not earlier than *Śvetāśvatara Up.* IV. 10. Yet the conception, though clothed in a different language, was there in the *R̥gveda Saṃhitā* and the earlier *Upaniṣads* (the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Chhāndogya*). In the very demand which they make that the self of man—the self of the universe should be known by reflection—should be sought for, it is implied that the form which, man and the universe readily reveal of themselves, is not the self—the true reality, and if we regard them as such we must be under a delusion—an *Avidyā* or *Māyā* as it was most happily expressed afterwards.

6, In the *R̥gveda Saṃhitā* again it is positively asserted

that the self of man is the self of the universe—the energy behind it : the daughter of the Ṛṣi says in a hymn :

अहमेव वात इव प्रवामि

आरभमाणा भुवनानि विश्वा । Rv. X. 125. 6.

Tr.—It is I who blow like the wind beginning the activities of all the worlds.

In another, the Ṛṣi himself says :

तुष्ट्वेव विश्वा भुवनानि विद्वान्

समैरयं रोदसी धारयं च । Rv. IV. 42. 3.

Tr.—Like Tvaṣṭa, I the wise (knowing) created the universe and held the heaven and the earth (apart).

Similarly in Rv. X. 61—

इयं मे नाभिरिह मे सधस्थम्

इमे मे देवा अयमस्मि सर्वः ।

Tr.—This is my nave, here is my abode, these are my Gods, I am the all,
the doctrine of identity developed in the Upaniṣads has an unmistakable germ.

7. The conception of the reality behind the many and of one assuming the manifold form must have been introduced as a necessary corollary of these conceptions—developed in later Vedānta as Āvaraṇa and Vikṣepa Śaktis of Māyā.

8. Therefore, as all currents that fertilise the sacred soil of Āryyāvarṭta point to the snowy tops of the Himālayas, whether we are able to trace them back to their sources or not, so the thought-currents that ennobled the minds of the Indo-Aryans through the solacing influence of the Upaniṣads, had their origin, whether we can trace the intervening processes in the darkness of the Past or not, in the hymns of the Ṛgveda—the oldest literary monument of India—to which a sanctity and eternity was conceded by the majority of ancient Indian thinkers.

9. This idealism of the Ṛgveda denying the reality of all plurality and consequently of all succession in space or time,

all contrast of subject and object, all mutual dependence of cause and effect, runs right through the Brāhmaṇas into the Upaniṣads.* The Ātman or self gets a clearer definition in the Brāhmaṇas and from an originally essentially negative conception denying substantiality to all that is not inalienable and can be stripped off from an object as its not-self, and as the conception of the Ātman of the universe is developed, (e. g. in Tāittirīya Br. III. 12. 9. 17. Śatapatha Br. X. 6. 3.) denying substantiality to all that is excluded from the sum of being and therefore from reality, a more definite attempt at comprehending the Reality as a positive factor becomes gradually manifest.

Section II—After the Riddle of Life.

10. The solution of the problem of life and the great riddle of the universe was early recognised to depend on the knowledge of this self or Ātman—the substance—the reality of the objects. In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, undoubtedly one of the oldest, Yājñavalkya concludes his discourse with his wife Māitreyī with the fervent words :

आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः । मैत्रेय्यात्मनि खलुरे
दृष्टे श्रुते मते विज्ञात इदं सर्वं विदितम् । IV. 5. 6. Cf. II. 4. 5.

Tr.—The self indeed should be known—should be learnt from the lore, reflected upon and comprehended by concentrated meditation. O Māitreyī ! If the self is seen, heard, reflected upon and known, the entire universe is known.

The appeal is not to Māitreyī alone but to all humanity in all ages and climes, for the vision of the seer is timeless and universal. Basing on this canonical text, the knowledge of the *Ātman* or self was called Darśana (from the root Drś) and not only the orthodox but the most heterodox systems were included within the compass of this term.

*For an opposite view vide "Philosophy of the Upanishads" by Mr. S. C. Chakrabarti, M.A., B.L., published by the Calcutta University, 1935.

11. The life or the universe is a synthesis and any comprehensive view of either must be in the form of a synthesis. The Darśanas, therefore, attempted to understand the nature of man and his relation to the universe as a whole—and accepted no arbitrary, conventional or limited application. Again the whole is not a mere mathematical aggregate of parts and it is not possible to have a conception of the whole merely by knowing the separate parts. It would be like the conception of an elephant from the concepts of the blind men in the story, each of whom touched a separate part of the animal; for all our knowledge is derived by relation and proportion of things—by comparison and contrast, and time is a most necessary factor in the process. If a whole is to be comprehended, it must be comprehended at once and not in succession of time—part by part. In the case of the universe, even the parts can never be known exhaustively. If, however, the whole is comprehended, the parts are comprehended. If the concept man is comprehended, each individual man is comprehended. To know the whole truth about the smallest atom of matter—the scientist must know the Infinite self in whom all things eternally are. To know the whole truth about the subjective self the philosopher must know the objective world as it is in itself. To know the whole truth about the Infinite self the ecclesiast must comprehend the Finite in whom the Infinite finds his expression. In fact Science, Philosophy and Religion are three phases of fundamentally inseparable human thought and experience, and whenever in the history of man one has been divorced from the others, Truth has become shrouded in darkness. For Truth is the fundamental thing sought by Science, Philosophy or Religion from its particular standpoint and is the same in every case, so that one form of truth cannot be antagonistic to another without stultifying itself. The highest truth must combine the results of every department of life and experience. If it does not, it is so far not the absolute Truth. Darśana—a term more comprehensive than philosophy—implies a search for the deepest truth—an enquiry after the permanent under-

lying reality of all phenomena. It investigates into the mysteries of life in all its phases, tries to explain and analyse the objective world and establish its relation with Ātman or the Self. It involves, therefore, assimilation of knowledge gained in all legitimate fields of experience of the individual and the race, and recognises no barrier between Science, Philosophy or Religion because of its intense faith in the ultimate harmony of all phases of truth.

12. But the enquiry about Ātman is not so simple as it at first sight appears, and naturally presented many difficulties to the ancient thinkers, and speculations were rife even at the time of the Brāhmaṇas as to its nature and characteristics. Empirical observation had shown to these thinkers that things were non-existent before they came into being ; and they applied this experience to the fields of their highest enquiry. A little reflection, however, made it clear to them that this non-existence could not have been mere privation, for, in that case, there would be a total annihilation of the relation of cause and effect, and everything could come out of everything else. So we find an attempt in the *Brāhmaṇas* to define and determine the nature of non-existence—an attempt that culminated afterwards in the recognition, by Indian Logicians, of the category of प्रागभावः or potentiality as a condition of all Being. In Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa VI. I. I., it is said :

असद्वाऽइदमप्रऽआसीत् । तदाहुः किं तदसदासीदित्यूषयो वाव तेऽप्रोऽसदासीत्तदाहुः
के तऽऋषय इति प्राणा वाऽऋषयस्ते यत् पुरास्मात् सर्वस्मादिदमिच्छन्तः श्रमेण तप-
सारिषंस्तस्मादृषयः ।

Tr.—This (universe) was indeed in the beginning non-existent. Then they said, "What was *this non-existent* that was ?" "The *R̥ṣis*, children, were they who were in the beginning non-existent". Then they said, "Who were the *R̥ṣis* ?" "The *Prāṇas* (the vital energies) were those *R̥ṣis*. That they, before all this universe (came into being), desiring its existence, were conscious (अरिषन्) by

their exertion and energy, is why they are *Rṣis* (from root *ṛiṣ* to know").

In this text, we have first to note the use of the particle 'Vāi' (changed into 'Vā' by the rules of Sandhi) after 'Asat', which presupposes a theory of non-existence in a cruder form which must have been prevalent before the time of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, and which the text appears to accept in a sense made clearer in the following clauses. Secondly, the term 'Asat' here does not mean void or privation and is not a negative term and is easily convertible into 'Sat', the basis of the doctrine of the Vedānta. It, however, presupposes the doctrine of void in some form, that was long afterwards systematised by a section of the followers of Buddha. Thirdly, from what follows the text, the term *Prāṇa* means the energy of the universe analysed in terms of the Indriyas—the sense-organs and the motor organs of the Individual. The *Prāṇas* are the different Phases of activity which, if separate, cannot provide the creative energy, and have to be unified as a *Puruṣa* or *Hiraṇyagarbha* for the creation or evolution of this universe. The *Prāṇas* play a great part in the later development of Indian thought. They are directly the *Tanmātras* of the Vedānta and the *Sāṅkhya*—and indirectly by the method of their evolution, they are suggestive of an understanding of the universe by an analysis carried to its extreme by the *Nyāya* and the *Vāiśeṣika* systems. Lastly, in the suggestion of the derivation of the term *Rṣi* (which is different from what we have in the *Nirukta*) there is the recognition that for the final cause or causes (which must be in the form of consciousness), to know is to create, or in other words, any expression of the ultimate principles of creation must be in the form of consciousness. The *Prāṇas* were *Rṣis* as final causes and not *Drṣis* like the *Rṣis*—Seers of Vedic Mantras (from root *Drṣ*)—who are also called *Smārakas* (from root *Smṛ*) or recollectors. It is probable that all the three roots *Riṣ* (or more properly *Rṣ*), *Drṣ*, and *Smṛ* were cognate and were derived from a common root 'R' to know and indicated different phases of knowledge—*Rṣ* denoting that form of knowledge which was equivalent to creation—the cons-

ciousness of the final cause, while both *Drś* and *Smṛ* indicated a knowledge of the past—the former denoting the recovery by genius or intuition of a truth that lay hidden—and the latter denoting the recollection of a past experience. It may be noted that the particle '*Sma*' in Sanskrit has actually a past significance and the '*sm*' of the root *Smṛ* may be its shortened form. It is also worth while to remember that roots denoting knowledge in Sanskrit usually denote motion, thus suggesting activity to consciousness. I have digressed a bit into the fields of Philology because the words of an ancient language give us the surest clue to the development of thought at that distant age.

13. To return to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, in X. 6. 5., which is indetical with Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad I. 2, we read—

नैवेह किञ्चनामऽआसीद् मृत्युर्नैवेदमावृतमासीदशनाययाशनाया वै मृत्युस्तन्मनोऽ-
कुरुतात्मन्वी स्यामिति । &c.

Tr.—There was *nothing* in the Universe in the beginning. It was covered by death in the form of hunger (will-to-be?) and hunger is death. The Eternal Being thought "I be animated by the Self" (as opposed to Death which is, therefore, the Not-self.) &c.

Hunger is Death—the nothing—the Not-self! what a store-house of suggestion there is in this one expression! It could very well have been, and most probably was, the mother of diverse views in the thought-world of ancient India.

14. Again, in the Chhāndogya Brāhmaṇa VIII. 2. 1—2., which is the same as Chhāndogya Upaniṣad VI. 2. 1—2., it is asserted—

सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयम् । तद्धैक आहुरसदेवेदमग्र आसीदेक-
मेवाद्वितीयम् । तस्मादसतः सज्जायत । १ । कुतस्तु खलु सोम्यैव स्यादिति होवाच
कथमसतः सज्जायेतेति । सत्त्वेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयम् । २ ।

Tr.—*Being* undoubtedly, my good man, was this universe in the beginning—the one without a second. But some say it was *Non-being* that this universe was in the beginning—the one without a second. Therefore *Being* is gene-

rated *ex-nihilo*. 1. "But how, my good man, may this be", he said, "How may Being be generated *ex-nihilo*? Surely it was *Being* that this universe was, my good man, in the beginning—the one without a second." 2.

In the light of this passage, there can hardly be any doubt as to the existence of a theory of non-existence—a nihilism amongst a strong section of Vedic teachers whose views the extant Brāhmaṇas were out to destroy. There must have been a long continued philosophical activity in the country before man could come to the conclusion reflected in the passage; for they are not mere sparks of thought—mere guesses at truth, but are supported by arguments and reasons and maxims, which show a long familiarity with philosophic problems before the time that gave birth to them.

15. That there was a rich store of literary works before the Upaniṣads is almost certain. In Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad II. 4. 10., mention is made of the hymns of the Ātharvaṇas and Āngirāṣas, the traditional narratives (Itihāsaḥ and Purāṇam), the Sciences (Vidyāḥ), the secret instructions (Upaniṣadaḥ), the verses (Ślokāḥ), the aphorisms (Sūtrāṇi), the parables (Anuvyākhyānāni), the expositions (Vyākhyānāni) besides the three Vedas—the R̥k, the Yajus, the Sāman,—as the breath of the Great Being; and in Chhāndogya Upaniṣad VII. 1. 2., we find necrology (Pitryam), Arithmetic (Rāśiḥ), Divination (Dāivam), the preparation of the vessels for the rituals (Nidhiḥ), the Vāko-vākya* (Logic), the only way of conduct (Ekāyanam), Theology (Devavidyā), the doctrine of Brahman (Brahmavidyā), knowledge of all beings (Bhūtavidyā), the art of war (Kṣatrayidyā), astrology (Nakṣatrayidyā), Snake-science (Sarpavidyā), and fine arts (Devajanavidyā), mentioned besides the three Vedas and the Atharvaṇ and traditional narratives which are raised to the status of the 4th and the 5th Veda. It is evident that all these *Vidyās* had already gained a sacro-sanctity and if they were not all identified with the Vedas, they were at least con-

*वाकीवाक्यं तर्कशास्त्रम् *Saṅkara Bhaṣyam*.

sidered Vedic in their character—those in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* being the breath of the Supreme Being as much as the Vedas were. Many of these were undoubtedly lost or superseded by later literature, but the few that remained must have been collected under the designation of *Brāhmaṇa* or literature in connection with the *Brahman* as the *Samhitās* are called in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* VI. 1. 1. This accounts for the somewhat motley character of these *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Atharvaveda*. Further we have here the authority of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* itself declaring that the *Upaniṣads* (plural) formed a part of this *Brāhmaṇa* literature. The late date usually ascribed to the *Brāhmaṇas* or to the *Upaniṣads* seems, therefore, hardly justifiable.* Much might have been added later and the texts might have been modified or revised from time to time, but the sanctity already gained by them could not have allowed them to be modified in such a way as to give them an altogether different character. In the *Bahma-jāla-sutta*, one of the sermons supposed to have been preached by Buddha himself, no less than sixty-two different views of Life and the Universe with several subdivisions are mentioned to have been known to Buddha himself. These must have taken a long time to develop from the almost homogeneous and harmonious view of the *Upaniṣads*. The *Mahābhārata* also has numerous passages in which a large number of philosophical sects are mentioned. The names of some of the later sects might have been added afterwards, but there can be little doubt that at the time of the *Mahābhārata* which was almost wholly composed before Buddha, numerous diverse views of the Problem of Life had made their appearance. The extant *Brāhmaṇas* or *Upaniṣads*

*From a comparison of passages in the *Sat. P. Br.* XIV. 1. 2—18. *Ait. Br.* 2—17. *Tait. S.* 1. 4., 1. 5., 2. 5., 7. 3., *Prajapati* seems to be the vernal equinox. And from *Tait. Br.* 3. 9. 22. 1., *Ait. Br.* 3. 13. 9. and from *Ath. V.* 13. 1., etc. it will appear that the star *Rohini* was at the vernal equinox at the time, leading us back to 3101 B. C., the beginning of the Kali Era, identified with the era of the deluge by Dr. Mill. (vide Wilson's *Introduction to Vishnu Purana* P. lxxv.)

so far as can be judged from the thoughts reflected in them are the direct out-come of the idealism of the Ṛgveda Samhitā and must have been far removed, by virtue of the harmonious air in them, from a time when there were dozens and scores of jarring sects.

16. History in the western sense of the term or chronology is wanting in India, for the Indian believes that it is *truth* in human experiences that matters and this has been carefully collected and preserved in his Śāstras, which have been revised modified and often superseded as a result of fresh experience. A continuous tradition comes down from the Brāhmaṇa period in every branch of learning and in every school carried from master to pupil in succession through generations. Greater weight must be attached to this tradition than to mere guesses from doubtful interpretations of stray words occurring in works written thousands of years ago—I say 'written' because Rāsi (Arithmetic) and Astronomy as branches of learning cannot be conceived to have been carried on without some form of writing. We find the numbers (both cardinal and ordinal) used in the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas and the most exact calculations and measurements which must presuppose writing apart from the improbability of the whole host of Vedic literature being transmitted only orally.* The Sūtras or the Mnemonic literature could only be helpful as a supplementary when other means had been adopted to preserve the original ; and the other means could only conceivably have been writing or representing on things. But, to come to our point, the term Brāhmaṇa as indicated above denoted all the branches of learning mentioned in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka text because they pertained to the Vedas. Deussen is clearly wrong in taking Itihāsaḥ and Purāṇam in this passage in the technical sense which obtained long afterwards. Here they evidently refer to the traditional stories which are

*For other views, vide Winternitz Indian Literature Vol. I. Macdonell's History of Sanskrit Literature, Keith's History of Sanskrit Literature (Heritage of India Series) Ch. I. etc.

found in the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads *e. g.* of Śunaḥśepa, Āruṇi, Śvetaketu etc. It should be noticed that the word Itihāsapurāṇam in the Chhāndogya text is combined as forming one aggregate (singular) and is not separated as different branches of learning. A cursory glance at the list of learning would convince us that some of them were for the performance of ordinary duties of life while others were for higher purpose. The Brāhmaṇas were, therefore, divided into two broad divisions—one for the householder and the other called the Āraṇyaka or the forest-portion to be studied by one who took to the forest at any time of life, giving up all worldly concerns. This latter naturally included the Upaniṣads, which being at the end of the Vedas (comprising not only the *Mantras* but the *Brāhmaṇas* as well) were termed Vedānta in a very literal sense. But they were Vedāntas in a far more real sense than this, in as much as they claimed to impart the highest knowledge to man—the truest interpretation of the Vedic *Mantras* and the sacrifices,—the knowledge of the self. The term *Upaniṣad* implied a teaching imparted to the pupil when he sat alone near the teacher and not in an assembly (*Samśad*)—an imparting of a secret knowledge (*Rahasyam*) which required a good deal of discipline and preliminary preparation on the part of the pupil. The knowledge imparted through them was called the Supreme knowledge (*Parā Vidyā*) as opposed to *Aparā* or the lower form of knowledge gained through the other branches of learning.* This empirical knowledge was some times called *Avidyā* as opposed to *Vidyā* or true knowledge. Mere knowledge of the Vedic *Mantras* and other branches of learning without the light of the Upaniṣads was not considered adequate—something more was necessary for *Vidyā*—the knowledge of the Supreme self. This is hinted in Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad IV. 1. 2, In this passage king Janaka is at the first instance asked to propitiate *Vāk* (the energy of speech) which is called the Supreme Self (Brahman) and by which all the branches of

* *Vide* मुख्य Up 1. 4—9. and Sankara's Introduction.

learning already mentioned in II. 4. 10., of the book along with Iṣṭam (Sacrifice), Hutam (oblation to the fire), Āśitam (feeding), Pāyitam (giving of water) i. e. all acts of piety, and even this world and the world beyond and all beings are fully known. And then, one by one, *Prāṇa* (breath), the sense energy of the eye,—of the Ear, the *Manas* (the mind), the *Hṛdaya* (the innermost mind—the core) are identified with the Supreme Self and Janaka is successively advised to propitiate them, but Janaka does not still think his instruction complete. It appears, therefore, that the *Samhitā* and the *Brāhmaṇas* (including the *Āraṇyakas* which incorporated the *Upaniṣads*) are indissolubly connected with each other and any attempt to try to understand the one without the other must be fruitless.*

Section III—The *Ātman* and the *Brahman*.

17. The categories of *Ātman* and *Brahman* gained in perspicuity and clearness in the *Brāhmaṇas* and particularly in their *Upaniṣad* portions. What was '*Tadekam*' in the *Samhitās* without any determination except that of unity and was the sole reality behind the universe called '*Idam*' came to be signified by the terms *Ātman* (the self) or *Brahman* ("The Word", meaning the expression or activity of the consciousness—the final cause of the Universe). We have seen how the *Vedas* were called *Brahman* in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and how the term *Brāhmaṇa* was derived from it and we have also noticed in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* that the very first advice of Yājñavalkya to Janaka was—'*Vāk* is *Brahman*'. This *Vāk* is said to be equivalent to '*Vār*' from the root '*Vṛ*' to cover, to pervade, to flow, in the *Śatap. Br. VI. 1. 1.* We know '*Vār*' means also 'water' in the *Rv. Samhitā*. It is possible there was

*As a further proof of this interconnection, I may mention that the *Isopaniṣad* forms a part of the *Vajasaneya-Samhita* and not of its *Brahmana*. The separation of the *Upaniṣads* from the main collection as separate treatises must have taken place not very early, for even *Sankara* refers to the majority of them as still forming the concluding chapters of their respective *Brahmanas* in his *Upaniṣad* commentary. (vide Deussen's *Philosophy of the Upaniṣads* pp. 30—31.)

another cognate root 'Br' with a sonant, having the same meaning as 'Vr', and yielding the secondary roots 'Brh' 'Brđh' to augment, to grow. Thus it is that from the primary sense of 'the word', Brahman came gradually to mean 'the highest', 'the Supreme Self', 'the absolute consciousness'. From this it is also possible to conjecture why the Vedas as "the word"—the expression of the absolute, in the last analysis, could be only eternal and without a composer (apāūruṣeya). Under the belief that the Vedas are Nitya and Apāūruṣeya, is the truth which man has admitted, though partially, in all ages and countries, that the poetic genius of man can reveal a truth far beyond the ordinary ken and if properly disciplined can know the absolute Truth. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Indians believe that the poetic genius of the early Vedic seers must have seen the truth which is a process—a growth, and which, therefore, can realise itself in the diverse views of the Universe. Their penance, their sacrifice made them the fittest medium for the Supreme Being to reveal himself in the form of hymns so suggestive in their character that these remain to this day the perennial spring of thought. The assumption that the Upaniṣads could at any time be antagonistic to these hymns is as unwarranted as imaginery. That they were meant for men at a higher stage of their evolution and were, therefore, distinct from what were meant at a lower stage in the other parts of the Brāhmaṇas, it goes without saying. But they both represent different aspects of the one absolute Truth. Men and even nations are widely apart in the scale of evolution and do not and cannot see things in the same relation and proportion and must see the Truth in the limitation of their own capabilities. And as they advance onwards, deeper and still deeper truth will be theirs till they reach the One Truth which is the absolute Reality. But before this, man must begin with a working hypothesis—which is true within certain limits—which can satisfy his soul to the extent of his capacity and which ultimately will increase his capacity—will make him grow in the evolutionary process. Such a working hypothesis was supplied by the

different branches of studies in what is considered to be the ritualistic portion of the Brāhmaṇas. Such a working hypothesis was supplied by the atoms at the commencement of the nineteenth century, and we all know how valuable has been its contribution to the modern science of Chemistry. How valuable was the service rendered by the hypotheses of the Brāhmaṇas to Science, Mathematics, Astronomy, and Medicine of the country, we have no means of gauging. But by leading on to its sequel *viz.* the Āraṇyaka portions, it has contributed to the philosophical knowledge of the world a gift of no mean value—a lesson in sacrifice which the beast in man learns but tardily even today. That the Upaniṣads were in reality the sequel to the Brāhmaṇas, not by a mere juxtaposition, but as the next logical step of education, can be gathered from the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads themselves. In the Tāittirīya Brāhmaṇa, for instance, it is said, “No one *not versed in the Vedas* can comprehend the Great Ātman (Bṛhantam Ātmānam) the underlying principle of all (sarvvānubhūm) in an uncertainty (sāmparāye)—the Ātman by which and through which the Sun shines blazing with lustre, the father is related to the son and the son to the father in every birth” III. 12. 9. 17. Here it is asserted that a certain knowledge of the supreme Ātman can only be had from the Vedas (*i.e.* the Saṃhitās), there being no other proof of his existence. Monier Williams seems to me to be right in not taking Sāmparāya in his lexicon in a technical sense which attached to it later in the Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas. In this passage Sāmparāya must mean ‘doubt’ ‘uncertainty, from which no clear conception can follow’. The text continues, “This is the eternal majesty of the Brāhmaṇa that he does not grow large or small by virtue of Karman. He who knows Him is His self. Knowing Him, one is not smeared by Karman, which is vicious (III. 12. 9. 18.)”. We find the Bṛhat Ātman is called Brāhmaṇa* here, or the One of

*Commentators have explained it as ब्रह्म वेत्ति असौ=वेदविद् being in contrast with अवेदविद् in the previous sentence, but it is more probable that it attempted to combine as one word the phrase—‘Bṛhat Atman’ just preceding.

Brahman (presumably the Vedas). The text undoubtedly refers to the doctrine of Karman and asserts that the Supreme Soul is beyond all evolution or involution. The relation of the Universe and the Individual to the Brahman is clearly brought out in another passage of the same Brāhmaṇa (III. 10. 8. 4.), a portion of which I translate :

"Fire is in my speech, my speech is in my *Hṛdaya* (the innermost mind), the *Hṛdaya* is in me, the 'me' is in immortality, the immortality is in *Brahman*."

"Wind is in my vital breath, the vital breath is in *Hṛdaya* the *hṛdaya* is in me, the 'me' is in immortality, the immortality is in *Brahman*,"

"The Sun is in my eye, the eye is in *Hṛdaya*, the *hṛdaya* is in me etc."

"The Moon is in my mind (*Manas*), the mind is in my *Hṛdaya* etc."

"The quarters are in my ear, the ear is in my *Hṛdaya* etc."

"The waters are in my seed, the seed is in my *Hṛdaya* etc,"

"The diverse trees and vegetables and corn are in my hairs, the hairs are in my *hṛdaya* etc."

"*Indra* (the strength of the Universe) is in my strength, the strength is in my *Hṛdaya* etc."

"*Parjanya* (the Cloud-god as the top of this world) is in my head, my head is in my *Hṛdaya* etc,"

"*Isāna* (the unrestrained activity of this Universe) is in my anger, my anger is in my *hṛdaya* etc."

"*Ātman* (the self of the Universe) is in my self, my self is in my *hṛdaya*, my *hṛdaya* is in me, the 'me' is in immortality, the immortality is in *Brahman*."

"May my self, my life (about to flee through fear of death) come back again" and so on.*

*Cf. Br. A. Up. VIII. 9. 20—27.

It is possible to interpret this prayer in diverse ways. But it is fairly obvious that the idea of unity shown in the hymns of the Ṛgveda could not but take root and was fast spreading out its foliage into the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads. The Asuras in the Saṃhitā—i.e. the gods in their gross form—the givers of life (from असु + रा) or the slayers of enemies (from 'As' to kill), soon came into disrepute as this unity was more and more firmly grasped (*vide* Ṛv II. 30. 4., VII. 99. 5., VIII. 96. 9., X. 121. 10. etc.) and were transformed into *Suras* (from the lost root 'Sur' cognate with 'Svar' 'to shine' and with Sūryya, the Sun, and Sūri, the wise)—the lights—the glorious aspects of the One reality to whom the *Asuras* were opposed. This is why in the Śatap. Brāhmaṇa VI. 1. 1., Indra, Agni, and other gods are derived from the primordial *Asat* as the energy of the senses (Indriyas) etc., and are no longer the personal gods, and in the Chhānd, Up. VIII. 8. 5., the teaching that the Ātman of man consists in the body is characterised as *Asurāṇām Upaniṣad*. That this gross teaching was allowed the dignity of an Upaniṣad shows the extreme tolerance of the *Vedic* teachers towards views antagonistic to theirs. In the domain of thought there was absolute freedom even to the extent of preaching Atheism and Nihilism.

Section IV—Differing views on Unity.

18. The Upaniṣads, however, were not themselves agreed in their views and though the existence of the One root Principle was beyond dispute there was difference of opinion as to its nature—and though absolute unity was aimed at by all of them in a general way, the moment an attempt was made at defining it, it became a dual principle, for in defining a thing, it must be related or compared to something else which was its opposite. All our knowledge of the universe, thus rests on a duality in which everything has its opposite. So it is difficult at any time to grasp the real idea of unity. All glory to the great Śaṅkarāchāryya that he could recognise this unity and was able to live this Truth which is seen but

imperfectly even now. In the Īsopaniṣad, for instance, there was a distinct trace of duality in its very first line—

ईशा वास्यमिदं सर्वं यत् किं च जगत्यां जगत् ।

Tr.—All this is enveloped by the Supreme Lord—whatever lives, moves and has its being on the universe.

This dualism the Upaniṣad tries to solve by means of a paradox—

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।

पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥ Br. Ā. Up. V. 1. 1.

Tr.—That (Supreme Being) is the whole—this (Universe) is the whole. From the whole, the whole comes forth. Taking the whole of (from) the whole, the whole is left as a remnant.

In the Tālttirīya Up. II. 7., the root principle is, after the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, *Asat*—

असद्वा इदमग्र आसीत् । ततो वै सदजायत ।

Tr.—This (universe) was indeed in the beginning *Asat*. From that indeed the *Sat* (Being) came forth.

In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up., as we have already seen, there was nothing on the Universe in the beginning—

नैवेह किञ्चनाग्र आसीत् ।

I. 2. 1.

and again a little later—

आत्मैवेदमग्र आसीत् पुरुषविधः ।

I. 4. 1.

Tr.—This universe in the beginning was indeed the Self, of the nature of the Puruṣa, (presumably in the sense of Rv. X. 90.)

In the Chhāndogya Up., emphasis is laid on the *Sat*, as we have already seen in VI. 2. 1.—2,

In the Kathopaniṣad III. 10—11., the Supreme Being is defined by a gradation in the evolutionary process—

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्था अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः ।

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्बुद्धे रात्मा महान् परः ॥

महतः परमव्यक्तमव्यक्तात् पुरुषः परः ।

पुरुषान्न परं किञ्चित् सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥

Tr.—The Arthas* (the images of the objects of the senses) are superior to the senses, thought is superior to the images, reflection is superior to thought and the Great Self is superior to reflection. The primordial element is superior to the Great (Mahān) and the Puruṣa (Being) is superior to the primordial element. Nothing is superior to Puruṣa. He is the limit—the ultimate goal.

Here also Puruṣa is to be taken in the sense in vogue in the Puruṣasūkta. In the Muṇḍaka Up., III. 1. 1. and Śvet. Up., IV. 6., the duality of the Supreme Self and the Individual Self is maintained, after the famous hymn of the R̥v. I. 164. 20.

द्रा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखायां

समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।

तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्य-

नश्नन्नन्योऽभिचाकशीति ॥

Tr.—Two fair-winged close friends attach themselves to the same tree. One of them tastes the sweet berries, the other gazes on without eating.

But the plurality of the Universe is a product of the *Akṣara* in the former, “just as spider creates and draws in, just as on the earth grow the herbs, just as from the conscious individual grow the hairs, so from the Immutable grows this Universe” I. 1. 7. In the latter, a Supreme Self over and above the duality is postulated in the famous verse—

अजामेकां लोहितशुक्लकृष्णां

वह्नीः प्रजाः सृजमानां सरूपाः ।

अजो ह्येको जुषमाणोऽनुशेते

जहात्येनां मुक्तभोगामजोऽन्यः ॥

*Almost a Buddhistic technicality. *Sankara* accepts this on the strength of Br. A. Up. III. 2. 2—9. According to him, महान् आत्मा is *jīva* the enjoyer, or *Hiranyagarbha* the creator (*vide* Notes on Br. Sut. I. 4. 1.)

Tr.—The One Unborn (Mother element of Aristotle) red white and black (corresponding to the three Guṇas,—Rajas, Sattva and Tamas) creating many children with forms, the one Unborn (father element) enjoying closely adheres to. The other Unborn (the supreme neutral element) leaves her (in disgust) as one enjoyed (by another).

Happily in this passage, the Guṇa 'Sattvam', as suggested by the word 'Śukla' is placed in the middle—a golden mean, as it were, between 'Rajas' (activity) and 'Tamas' (inertia). Obviously this was one of the Śruti texts on which the Sāṅkhya and Yoga Philosophies chiefly relied. But it has been interpreted from the strictly Vedānta point of view as can be gathered from Prakāśānanda's Siddhāntamuktāvali v. 8., where the meaning is given as follows—

“Since Nescience is to be explained as the cause of the unreal world, to allay the doubt whether it is a product or not, the word *unborn* is used to say that it is not. Absence of any word for Nescience in the text cannot be seriously urged, for the word Unborn being in the feminine denotes Nescience (Avidyā, fem.) In the word 'One', the plurality of Nescience is denied. Made up of the three Guṇas, she is able to produce manifold products,—this is suggested by *Lohita* etc. In the word unborn (masc.), the text denies that Jīva, conditioned by that kind of Nescience, can be a product. Plurality of Jīvas is denied in the word *one*. Now a plurality of Jīvas is a matter of common experience, how is the unity of Jīva possible? To this objection the text shows by the word *indeed* (*Hi*) which expresses something well-known, that the unity of Jīva is proclaimed in the Upaniṣads and is proved by argument. Again, it may be objected that Jīva, being identical with, cannot have a separate mode of existence from, the self-luminous Brahman. This objection is met by the word '*lies by*' which means that having approached Nescience, Jīva lies as if asleep, being involved in Nescience, with his eye of knowledge closed. Afterwards, enjoying *i.e.* serving her standing in the

form of objects, is involved in the bonds of the transmigratory world, just as the dreamer is involved in his dreams. This, the text suggests by the word *enjoying*. But Nescience being eternal *ab ante* cannot be destroyed and hence no final emancipation is possible—to this objection the text replies by the words 'he leaves her' *i. e.* he puts an end to Nescience by the intuition of the real nature of the self attained through Śruti. But, why should the Self resort to Nescience if it has to abandon her? The reply is that he does so indeed for the sake of enjoyment, as enjoyment can only be had through her. The Jīva abandons her when, through intuition of the Self, he deems her useless. Hence the text says 'through whom he had his fill of enjoyment'—the compound being resolved thus—'her through whom enjoyment has been enjoyed'. But how is Nescience declared to abandon Nescience in as much as association with Nescience as an attribute is essential for Jīvahood and consequently Nescience must form a part of the nature of Jīva? This objection the text meets with the words 'the *other* Unborn' *i. e.* the Unborn or Jīva which is different from Nescience. Jīvahood is not constituted by the presence within it of Nescience as an essential attribute, since Nescience is unintelligent and Jīva is intelligent, and also as we hold Nescience to be only a limiting condition (Upādhi) of Jīva*

In the Āitareya Upaniṣad, I. 1., (corresponding to Āitareya Āraṇyaka, II. iv. 1. 1.) stress is laid again on the *Ātman* alone,—

आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीत् । नान्यत् किञ्चन मिषत् ।

Tr.—This indeed was the One Self alone in the beginning, nothing else blinked.

Again, such phrases as यदणुभ्योऽणु (Mund. Up., II. 2. 2.) अणोरणीयान् (Kathopaniṣad, II. 20.) *paniciem miliacium*, to signify the Supreme Being, presuppose an attempt mentally to analyse and divide this universe into infinitesimal indivisible

atoms. It is clear, however, that the Indo-aryans had by the time of the Upaniṣads, created a new mental image, as is evidenced by the phrase **महतो महीयान्**,—following the passage of the Kathopaniṣad quoted above, opening out a microcosmic universe as infinite as the macrocosmic universe of suns, stars and systems without end, and the ultimate 'Anu' had given place to subtler principles obliterating the distinction between mind and matter.

अलीयान् ह्यतर्क्यमणुप्रमाणान् ।

Kath. II. 8.

Tr.—The subtler principle is incomprehensible because of its microcosmic dimension.

Thus it is that, in the Brahmasūtras, atomism in its material form has been said to be **शिष्टापरिग्रहाः** or not relied upon by single-minded concentrated thinkers (*vide* Vedānta Sūtras II. 1. 12., II. 2. 17. etc.)

19. Gāṭama, the founder of the Nyāya Philosophy, however, clung to this Physics of atoms and supplemented it by a metaphysics, the method and phraseology of which still govern the entire field of Indian thought. In his opinion, highest bliss or *Niḥśreyasa*, as he calls it, can only be attained through proper understanding of the sixteen categories. The first of these categories are the instruments of knowledge which are four in number: Perception, Inference, Analogy, and Testimony. Of these, Inference implies a prior knowledge of the theory of causation and leads to the subject of Logic, which is exhaustively dealt with by Gāṭama, including the rules of Induction, Deduction and Fallacies. By these instruments of knowledge, the twelve concepts or *Prameyas* (the second of the categories) are to be tested or proved. The *Prameyas* are—*Ātman* or Self, the body, the senses or *Indriyas*, the objects of the senses, *Buddhi* or judgment, *Manas* or thought, *Pravṛtti* or inclination, *Dosa* or fault, (*i.e.* love, envy, and darkness of mind), retribution, misery, future life, and *Apavarga* or freedom from misery. The *Ātman* or Self,

according to Nyāya, presides over the body, and is the agent and the enjoyer. Its existence is inferred from—इच्छा-द्वेष-प्रयत्न-सुख-दुःख-ज्ञानानि,—inclination and aversion, activity, pleasure and pain, and consciousness, which all point to a conscious animate driving energy. The Nyāya is, therefore, an all-round advance upon the Materialists (the Chārvākas for instance) who hold inert matter to be the cause of all motion by a peculiar combination which engenders in it what is understood by Force. The Nyāya takes its stand on Reason which can correct errors of Perception (*Pratyakṣa*) which is the only mode of proof admitted by the latter. The final end or *Apavarga* in the Nyāya system is attained by dispelling false knowledge which is at the root of the three *Doṣas* (faults), the cause of all activity (*Pravṛtti*) and hence of all birth and rebirth—the root of all misery. It is curious to note that the three *Doṣas* or blemishes almost correspond to the three blemishless *Guṇas* or constituents of *Prakṛti* of Sāṅkhya-Yoga systems, the Lohita-Śukla-Kṛṣṇa of the Upaniṣads.

20. The Vāiśeṣika or Ālūkyā philosophy, from the name Ulūka, probably the sage (Muni), mentioned in the Vāyupurāṇa Ch. 23. 213 and 216 and in the Mahābhārata शान्ति पर्व 47. 11.,* also known as Kaṇāda or atom-eater,—is a distinct advance on the Nyāya with which it is welded together in some of the later works e. g. Bhāṣāpariccheda and Tarkabhāṣā. It believes in the existence of a personal creator, setting the atoms in motion, and undertakes a classification of existence according to natural science. The world of experience is

*धौमो विभाणो माण्डव्यो धौमः कणानुभौतिकः । उत्तुकः परमो विप्रो मार्कण्डेयो महासुनिः । etc.

In the *Linga Purana* 24. 123, as in the *Vayu Purana*, he is mentioned with अचपादः (another name of *Gautama*) e.g. अचपादः कुमारश्च उत्तुको वत्स एव च । तत्रापि मम ते शिष्या भविष्यन्ति तपोधानः । योगात्मानो महात्मानो विमलाः शुद्धबुद्धयः । In the *Vayu Purana*, however, two *Ulukas* are mentioned—one a son of *Parasara* and the other of *Jatukarnya*. A slight difference of reading is also noticable in the case of the latter in the *Anandasrama* Edition of the *Vayu Purana* where for कुमारश्च is read कणादाश्च, making *Uluka* and *Kanada* two different persons, which is rather improbable.

divided into the triad that *really exists*, viz., substance, quality, and action ; and the relations of things of experience are also three, viz., commonness, differentia, and inherence. It is this differentia or particularity (विशेषः) which is a special feature of this philosophy that gives rise to its name. Afterwards a seventh category, that of *Abhāva*, was added to the list. On the realism of a fundamental genus called *Sattā* (Lat., *Eno*) depends the realism of the first three categories ; and though substance is the substratum of qualities, the Vāiśeṣikas believe in their independent real existence. The Individual Self is a substance—the substratum of the quality of Intelligence. The Supreme Self (Paramātmān) who is called Īśwara or the Lord, is the substratum of such qualities as omnipotence, omniscience etc. Kaṇāda reduced the instruments of knowledge to two only (or to three including memory knowledge) viz., Perception and Inference, such analogy and testimony as have any validity being included within the latter. This process of reduction both in the categories and in the instruments of knowledge shows a later growth. Knowledge is produced by the union of the self and the mind which is in constant communication with the objects through the senses. The highest end is absolute freedom of the self from the body (*Mokṣa*) and is attained by a true knowledge of the six categories, leading to an indifference towards all enjoyment and directing the mind from the objects of the senses to the Self, which is called a Yoga, achieved through entire devotion to God. The plurality of eternal all-pervading selves, the eternity of time and space and of atoms are postulated in this system. No direct knowledge of Time and Space is possible, a view apparently at variance with that of a section of Vedāntins and probably with that of Kant.

21. But the three principles that took shape as early as the cosmogony of the R̥gveda before the development of the universe—viz., (1) The Primæval Being. (2) Primitive Matter, and (3) The *Hiranyagarbha*, the first-born of

creation—soon found a philosophical expression in the three highest Principles of Sāṅkhya, viz., (1) *Puruṣa*, (2) *Prakṛti* and (9) *Mahān* founded by Kapila. The plurality of Individual souls or *Puruṣas* being once recognised, it was no longer necessary to postulate a Supreme Soul. Kapila denied the physics of Gāṭama or Kaṇāda and made important modifications in the psychology of the former. He was however, landed in an irreconcilable dualism, viz., that of the unfolding primitive matter (*Prakṛti*, *Pradhānam*, or *Avyaktam*, the non-differentiated undeveloped principle) as the object, and an original plurality of souls (*Puruṣas* or Individual Selves) as the subject. The subject is in some way entangled with the object which is free in a very material sense. In this dualistic conception, Kapila found his authority in the passages of the Upaniṣads, I have quoted, and other similar passages.* The *Puruṣas* are simple centres of consciousness and do not actually set in motion the *Prakṛti* which is a self-acting but unconscious principle. *Prakṛti* consists of the three *Guṇas*—*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*—held in equilibrium. These three, however, are not *Guṇas* or attributes in the Vāiśeṣika sense of the term, but are in combination the substance underlying the world of experience i. e. of all substances, attributes, and actions—the red, white and dark Unborn of the Upaniṣads—the cause of pain and pleasure and dullness. The mere presence of the *Puruṣas* breaks the equilibrium of the *Prakṛti* out of which the universe evolves as a process suggested by passages like the one already quoted from the Kathopaniṣad. *Prakṛti* passes into *Mahān* or *Buddhi* (cosmical mind) and *Ahaṁkāra* (cosmic Individuality or subjectivity), whence are evolved the five subtle elements (essences of sound, touch, colour, taste, and smell) on which depend the organs of knowledge (five sense-organs, five motor organs, and *Manas* or mind—the internal organ) ending with the five gross elements which make up the universe.

*.e.g. Br. Ar. Up. 1. 4. 6. "This only, enjoyed and enjoyer, is this whole universe." Maitrayaniya Up. 6. 10. Kath. 6—8.

Puruṣa inseparable from *Prakṛti* stands unaffected by the phenomena. Nature in itself is all bliss and order—it is only through a defect of the perceiving mind that it appears otherwise. The *Buddhi* has a preponderating *Sattva* admitting of a reflection of the *Puruṣa* in close contact with it and plays the conscious knower or perceiver as it were on account of this image of the conscious *Puruṣa* within it. The mind (*Buddhi*) goes out through the senses to objects and takes their forms. This process is termed *Khyāti* by the Sāṅkhya philosophers. In this process the *Sattva* of *Buddhi* is sometimes overpowered by *Rajas* or *Tamas* making the sensation disagreeable or dull. *Puruṣa* being nearest *Buddhi*, though not really affected, imagines himself as happy or miserable on account of these reflections in *Buddhi*. But when *Buddhi* shines with pure *Sattva* it transmits neither pleasure nor pain to the *Puruṣa* who is then entirely liberated from the bonds of *Prakṛti* which has ceased to act in regard to that *Puruṣa*.* Basing their doctrine on certain passages of the Upaniṣads, the Sāṅkhyas could not but admit the validity of *Āptavachana* (authoritative tradition) as the third instrument of knowledge over the two admitted by Kaṇāda. In his analysis of the universe, Kapila has gone beyond both Gāṭama and Kaṇāda—to a finer and subtler ultimate cause, which comprehends in a sweep both the mental and material worlds, than the *Paramāṇus* or atoms which are eternal and have no magnitude. The *Paramāṇus* may well compare with the *Tanmātras* or subtle elements of Sāṅkhya,—the only difference being that the latter are evolved, while the atoms of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems are eternal and causeless. The Sāṅkhyas asserted that nothing could come out of Non-being, nor could a Being be ever annihilated. Kapila held it impossible to postulate real existence to any of the categories of Kaṇāda except substance, which according to him was only one *viz.*, the *Prakṛti* eternally joined with the *Puruṣas* (spirits

**vide Sankhya Karikas 57—59.*

or selves). The passing out of *Buddhi* to the objects and its return to itself in the form of the objects as objective perceptions was a long step towards subjective Idealism from the realism of the Nyāya and Vāiśeṣika philosophies, though Kapila did not deny reality to the object. Pandit L. Srinivasa-chariar in his *Darśanodayaḥ*, however, suggests a logical scheme and order for the systems, which is at variance with the scheme given above. According to him, Buddhism and Sāṅkhya are at the antipodes as it were running on parallel lines; the one takes everything to be *Sat* (real) and the other *Asat* (unreal); identity of the cause and the effect is accepted by the one and denied by the other; the one sees substance in the ubiquitous *Prakṛti*, while the other finds substance nowhere (*Nāirātmya*). Other systems came into vogue by synthesis or variation, The order suggested is—Buddhism, Sāṅkhya, Nyāya, Yoga, Śāiva, Bhatta, Prabhākara, Śaṅkara, Bhāskara, Yādava, and Rāmānuja. Mr. T. R. V. Murti in reviewing this work in the *Philosophical Quarterly*, October, 1935 suggests another scheme, in which he also considers the Sāṅkhya to be the original system, historically and logically. Its inconsistencies, according to him, had twofold repercussions—one towards realism and the other towards absolutism. The realistic systems emphasised the independence of the object and did not take phenomena as illusion. They were positive in their outlook, and each can be conceived on the pattern of a judgment: Perceptual affirmation (Nyāya), the Imperative (*Mīmāṃsā*), the Hypothetical (Buddhistic Realism), and the Disjunctive (Jaina Anekāntavāda). The absolutist Systems arose out of a logical or historical criticism of the insecure Sāṅkhya dualism. They considered phenomena as illusion and wanted to reach the absolute through negation. But from what has been said above it will appear that the Sāṅkhya was the first move away from realism and its imperfections and inconsistencies are largely due to the concession it makes to realism which is therefore its precursor. That the absolutism of the Vedānta arises as a direct criticism of the Sāṅkhya position is not open to doubt. The Vedānta

Sūtras themselves bear testimony to the fact that they were chiefly directed against the Sāṅkhya tenets which therefore must have been holding the ground more than any other system.

22. The Yoga of Patañjali gave to the Sāṅkhya a practical turn by elaborating a system of discipline and concentration. We have already seen how the directing of the mind to the self is called a Yoga in the Vāiśeṣika philosophy. Gradually any attempt to counter-act the distraction of the senses was a Yoga, till Patañjali gave to the term the highly technical meaning for the attainment of Kāivalya (aloneness or absoluteness) of the Puruṣa. Patañjali thus improved upon Kapila by unfolding a practical course for the attainment of the ultimate end, and even in his conception of this ultimate end which is a step higher than *Mokṣa* or mere liberation from the bonds of *Prakṛti*. But the greatest service that he rendered to Indian Metaphysics was by the restoration of the conception of an *Īśvara*—a Supreme Lord to Sāṅkhya philosophy. I agree with Max Muller* in thinking that this admission of an *Īśvara* should not be put down as an accommodation to popular opinion. I do not hold with Mr. M. N. Dvivedi† that Patañjali's God was "a mere fiction, invented for purpose of meditation with a view to concentration of mind." It must have been a faith with Patañjali that led him to assert the existence of an *Īśvara*—the First Ordainer, transcending time (पूर्वेषामपि गुरुः कालेनानवच्छेदात् I. 26.)‡ in spite of the arguments of Kapila maintaining that it did not admit of proof. Patañjali must have seen in a way the limitations of the instruments of knowledge and must have felt that thought (reason) cannot, like the senses, lead to ultimate knowledge. He, therefore, perfected a system of contemplation (*Samādhi*) by persistent meditation (*Sādhana*) gaining mastery over nature (*vibhūti*)

*Indian Philosophy p. 473.

†Introduction to Mandukya Up. VIII.

‡Yoga aphorisms.

and ultimately attaining a Union with God—the condition of absoluteness (Kāivalyam). But dualism was not the real position of the Vedic teachers as we have already seen, and only made its appearance in some of their expressions because it is impossible to define unity. To make the two principles absolutely irreconcilable was far from the intention of the Upaniṣads. But this was where Sāṅkhya and Yoga, the two philosophies, to which the Vedānta Sūtras paid the highest attention, led to. The speculative mind of ancient India was drifting farther away from the teachings of the Vedas fearless of consequences even as one step leads on to another, however much it might try to preserve the sacrosanctity of the Vedas ; and it is not difficult to imagine that within not a very long time extreme materialists denying not only the authority of the Vedas, but all idea of God and religion, made their appearance—the leaders of anti-Brāhmaṇical schisms—the fore-runners of the Chārvākas, Jāinas and Bāuddhas. This might have instigated, as pointed out by Deussen,* the adherents of the Vedas to a systematic and scientific investigation into the contents of the Vedas.

23. Jāimini, who undertook to investigate the ritualistic portions, laid stress in his Pūrvamīmāṃsā or Karmamīmāṃsā on the ceremonials which according to him, were the aim of the Vedic injunctions, a faithful carrying out of which was the *Summum Bonum* of life. A statement of fact, according to the Mīmāṃsist, is valueless, unless it can be utilised in an injunction. To him, only the imperative (*Vidhi Chodanā*) is significant. It is a verbal activity—of the form of “Do this”—inducing an activity of the injunctioned towards an objective. The activity of the commanded has three aspects : (1) it is directed towards an objective e.g. *Svarga* in the injunction ‘*Svargakāmo yajeta*’ ; (2) for this it has to perform the enjoined acts e.g. *Yajña* ; and (3) the performance is to be in a particular sequence (*Itikartavyatā*).† All phenomena are significant as they play

*The system of the Vedānta p. 20.

†*Vide Vivarana Prameya Samgraha, Sut. I Varnaka ii.*

अस्ति तावद् भाव्य-करणविकर्तव्यतालक्षणेनांशवयेपीयता भावना नाम । etc.

their respective roles in this scheme of activity in the performance of *Dharma*. The end of *Dharma* is unseen—*Adṛṣṭa*—and therefore undemonstrable. The act itself is symbolic of the end and is properly termed rite or ceremony. Its source is revealed testimony which alone can give us the significant imperative (usually expressed by *Liṅ*). The self-validity of all knowledge, the eternity and impersonality of verbal symbolism, the eternal relation of sound and meaning, conception of creation through sound etc., (developing later in *Sphoṭa-vāda* of the Grammarians) are but logical sequences of this doctrine, which seems to have been inaugurated as a reaction against anti-Brāhmaṇical movement.

24. Bādarāyaṇa (probably the same as compiled the Vedic traditional lore or Itihāsa under the caption of Mahābhārata and was known as Vedavyāsa or arranger of the Vedas) systematised the contents of the Upaniṣads in his Śārīraka Mīmāṃsā—Uttaramīmāṃsā or Brahma Sūtras, and laid stress on the One esoteric Being—who is the only Reality and Goal of all Vedic teachings. From this standpoint reality can only be approached through negation or the cancellation of the world-illusion. Śaṅkarāchāryya, therefore, was the most rational of the interpreters of these Sūtras. The Madhva system is but a variation of the Nyāya on a religious basis. Bhāskara, Rāmānuja and others introduce elements from realistic viewpoints and are re-affirmations of the Sāṅkhya on a religious and unitary basis.

25. These and probably many other diverse doctrines were the direct or indirect outcome of the different views in the Upaniṣads. Many of them have been superseded and lost, while those that have come down to us have been improved upon from time to time and developed on parallel lines so that none of them in their present form can be said to be anterior to the others. Some of the doctrines lost may be and have been partially recovered from the polemics in the existing ones. Thus Mādhvāchārya in his Sarvadarśanasamgraha has

enumerated seventeen systems and has briefly stated their views, while no original books of many of them are now extant. The terms Sāṅkhya and Yoga besides the Vedānta are mentioned several times in the later Upaniṣads* showing that these two systems were popular at the time. The Brahmasūtras, therefore, originally must have been intended to show the utter inconsistency of these systems with the general trend of the Upaniṣads, although they had an apparent consistency with stray passages from the Upaniṣads taken out of their context. The two Mīmāṃsās, however, were not as much opposed to each other as supposed by many. The sacrifices, as I have already hinted, as early as the *Brāhmaṇas*, could be either (1) with ingredients i.e. द्रव्यात्मक or (2) purely conceptual i.e. भावनात्मक and the latter used to be considered to be higher than the former. But there could have been no antagonism between the two as the latter always presupposed the former. The passages quoted by Deussen in his *Philosophy of the Upaniṣads* (Eng. Trans. p. 62) from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.* (I. 4. 10., III. 9. 6., III. 9. 21.) or from the *Chhāndogya Up.* (I. 12., I. 10—11., IV. 1—3.) hardly bore the note of mockery, the great scholar reads into them, but were meant to bring the disciple who had already gained merit by the study of the Vedas and practice of sacrifices to a higher level of thought, for which he had precisely on account of the merit become fit. It was for this reason the two Mīmāṃsās were friendly and quoted from each other with approbation on many topics.† They differed only on the stress that each laid on either of the two aspects of Vedic teachings. It was this presupposition of the rituals that led the Buddha to break away from the Vedas.

*Svet. Up. VI. 13 and 22., Kathop. II. 3., 11 and 18, Mund. Up. III. 2. 6., Muktika Up. I. 6.

†As in Br. Sut. I. 2. 28 and 31., I. 4. 18., III. 4. 40., and probably also in IV. 3. 12., and IV. 4. 5 and 11., Jaimini's views are endorsed : and in Purva M. Sut. I. 1. 5., Badarayana's view is upheld. Badari, Atreya and Karṣṇajini have got honourable places in both the Mīmāṃsas.

INDIA'S SEARCH AFTER TRUTH

was when the mind of the student or disciple by a faith in the sacrifices and by other pious work was ennobled, that he was gradually led on to the real meaning of the sacrifices by means of allegories and by substitution of psychological ideas in place of the materials, as in the explanation of the horse-sacrifice in Bṛhadār Up. I. 1., or of the sacrificial fires in Chh. p. IV. 11—13. The Vedas did not teach merely religion in their ritualistic portions in the sense of the western Ecclesiasts, but taught all kinds of duties of life—*e.g.* the laws of hospitality and kindness to all creatures (**मनुष्ययज्ञ** and **भूतयज्ञ**) which were considered rituals along with the daily prayers and sacrifices to the Gods and the Manes ; and it was never possible for ordinary men to discard the rituals which regulated the daily course of life of the ancient Indians ; and when by doing his duties in society and in his family manfully, his mind became fit for higher training, he was given the instructions contained in the Upaniṣads which favoured renunciation of worldly life. Renunciation could have no virtue for a beggar who had nothing to renounce—who shirked his duties in family and in society because of his incapacity. The self is not attainable by the weaklings—the cowards. (Muṇḍakop. III. 2. 4.). It was Śaṅkarācāryya who first contended that sacrifices were not essential preliminaries to esoteric knowledge and a mere theoretical knowledge of the Vedas either in this life or in a *previous* one, was enough ; and was hotly contested on the point by the other schools of Vedānta, notably by that of Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara (vide his Bhāṣya on Brahma Sūtra I. 1. 4.) and by Ācāryya Rāmānuja in his interpretation of the term 'Atha' in 'Athāto Brahmajijñāsā', the first of the Vedānta aphorisms. The latter quotes as his authority Bodhāyana, the Vṛttikāra, (probably the noted author of the Bodhāyana Śrāutasūtras) who maintains that the Śarīraka (Brahmasūtras) and the Jāīminīya (Pūrvamīmāṃsā-sūtras) combined, form one Śāstra of sixteen chapters.* From all evidence, it may fairly be concluded that the two Mīmāṃsās

*Bodhāyana, however, seems to ascribe 16 chapters to the Jāīmi-

were for two different stages of life and that their grounds being altogether apart, there could have been no serious antagonism between them. The one was generally held to be the necessary preliminary of the other.*

26, With the advance of purity in life, the sacrifices became metamorphosed as much as the deities. The four priests as organs of the gods are replaced by speech, eye, breath, and Manas as organs of Ātman (Bṛhadār. Up. III. 1. 9—10.) corresponding to Fire, Sun, Wind, and Moon in nature. In Chh. Up. IV. 16. 1., the wind is the sacrifice, and mind and speech its courses. In Chh. Up. III. 16—17., the *Puruṣa* is the sacrifice, the three periods of his life (equivalent to 24, 44 and 48, the number of syllables in *Gāyatrī*, *Trṣṭubh*, and *Jagatī*) being the three pressings of *Soma*—his desires (as yet unsatisfied) being his consecration,—his enjoying the necessities of life the preliminary ceremonies (*Upasada*),—his pleasurable activities being like the *Stomas* and *Sastras*—his penance, charity, straightforwardness, hurtlessness and truthfulness being the fees. Actual sacrifice and deeds of piety and charity lead only to the world of the fathers (manes) whence there is a coming back again to the earth,—Vidyā or knowledge leads to the world of the Devas from which there is no

nīya Sūtras alone, though only 12 chapters are known. It has been suggested, on the strength of a verse in a South Indian MS., (quoted by M. M. A. Sastri as follows—

कर्मदेवताब्रह्मगीचरा सीदभी विधा सूत्रकारतः ।

जैमिनेर्मुनेः काशकृतस्ततः वादरायणदित्यतः क्रमात् ॥)

that the 4 chapters of *Kasakṛtsna's Devatamīmamsa* (now lost) in combination with the 12 chapters of *Karmamīmamsa* formed the *Purvamīmamsa* which later on went by the name of *Jaimini* only.

**Sankara* remarks—स्वविषयग्राहि हि प्रमाणानि, श्रोत्रादिवत्, all instruments of true knowledge are strong in their own province, as are the senses. The provinces of the two *Mīmamsas* being different, there can be no opposition between the two. Br. A. Up. Bhashya II. 1. 20.

urn.* But the knowledge could only be gradual, and symbolical presentations of Brahman as substitutes for ritual practices are recommended in the Upaniṣads. In Chh. Up. III. 11., *amas*, corresponding to the space in nature, is to be worshipped as *Brahman* whose four quarters are speech, breath, eye, and ear corresponding to fire, wind, sun, and the quarters. Again in III. 19., *Āditya* is to be worshipped as the whole *Brahman*, (and not as a quarter). In Br. Ār. Up. II. 1., Gārgya advises Ajātaśatru to worship the Puruṣa in the Sun, the moon, the lightning, the space, the wind, the water, one by one, and Ajātaśatru was not satisfied. Then the *Puruṣa* in the mirror—the *Puruṣa* that walks about (life)—the *Puruṣa* the quarters (the senses)—the *Puruṣa* that casts a shadow (death) are one by one recommended for worship as *Brahman*. The *Puruṣa* in the self (*Ātman*) was the last venture of Gārgya but Ajātaśatru was still not satisfied. Then Gārgya kept silent for some time and said 'this much was that' indicating that Brahman was beyond all speech.

27. The presupposition of a conflict between the Vedas and the Upaniṣads at some ancient period must lead to the proposition of *rapprochement* in view of their united treatment later, and Deussen has been at great pains to read meanings into certain simple texts of Katha and Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣads which would make a former hostility probable. Unfortunately Indians who have inherited the whole Sanskrit tradition cannot read in the language used the significance or force the great scholar brought up under a different tradition wants to attach to

We must remember that the Vedas were much more to the ancient Indian than what the Bible is to the Christian. They constituted in fact his whole education and culture—they laid down the laws of his daily duties according to which he must

*Brahm. S. III. 3. 31. S. Bhashya., Rv. X. 14. 8., Brhadaranyaka p. VI. 2. 16., Brahmasut. IV. 4. 22., Br. A. Up. I. 5. 10., VI. 2. 15. Chh. Up. IV. 15. 5., VIII. 15., V. 10. 3., Prasna I. 9., Mundaka 2. 10. etc.

fashion his life, besides being his guide in spiritual and religious matters. It is, therefore, absolutely unthinkable that there could be any conflict between them and the Upaniṣads which ostensibly deal only with the spiritual side of life and that also in its highest aspect. As a consequence of this presupposition, Deussen* has done violence to the passage—'*Juṣeta Brahma Pūrvyam*' in Śvet. Up. II. 7., by remarking that 'the expression here used, "Delight yourselves in the ancient prayer" indicates that a former practice is reintroduced and held in honour!' With due deference to the opinion of the scholar, I may point out that Pūrvyam, Prāktanam, Purātanam, ancient, old, are often used as attributes of the Primordial Being. In Sanskrit these words rarely suppose a discontinuity and have rather the opposite force of continuity through eternity. The passage, therefore, would mean—'Delight yourselves in the Primæval Brahman', and even if Brahman in this passage be taken to mean prayer, 'Brahma Pūrvyam' would mean the eternal prayer' rather than 'the former prayer that was discontinued'.

*Philosophy of the Upanishads, Eng. Trans. p. 64.

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A STUDY OF SĀṆKARA

CHAPTER II

The Method of the Vedānta.

SECTION I—EARLIEST METHODS—INSTINCT AND THE SENSES.

1. From the dawn of consciousness Man is constantly after the riddle of life and the universe. He cannot help it simply because he is *alive*—simply because he moves and cognises and feels. To him, in the infancy of his thought, the objective world that he perceives through his senses seems to be true. The Sun rises in the East and sets in the West—not that the earth revolves round its axis from West to East. With the advance of knowledge, however, he finds that many things, that were once *true* to him, were mere appearances and that he has to change his angle of vision about Truth and Reality as his “knowledge grows from more to more.” The primitive man, by the instinct of childhood and sometimes of genius, hits beyond his positive knowledge, systematizing by his imagination the elementary truths met with in the simple walks of his life. By his sensuous knowledge, he apprehends what is beyond his senses. The percept of the finite, by the very act of perception, awakens in him an apprehension of the infinite lying beyond his limit. The process, by which, ‘the semitangible and intangible objects of Nature’ were transformed into deities, was a long and arduous one. But that was the process naturally and rightly followed in all attempts to pierce beyond the limits of visible causes.* For all our fundamental ideas about religion “can be shown to have had their deepest roots and their true beginnings in that finite or natural world which, it is difficult to say why, we are so apt to despise, while it has been everywhere and is still the only royal road that leads us on from the finite to the

* *Vide* Max Muller’s ‘Origin of Religion’ Lecture IV.

infinite, from the natural to the supernatural, from nature to nature's God."†

2. In the *R̥gveda*, the oldest literary monument of man, these deities or *Asuras* were often called the *Devas* or the shining ones, suggesting the luminaries of heaven—the Sun and the Moon and the stars, spread out before the eyes in the blue firmament above. They were all sons of *aditi*, a term understood to be the constellation *Punarvasu* which was at the vernal equinox at some epoch of the Vedic hymns. Their region was the region of the North, while the region of the South was the region of winter and darkness where there were no *Devas* but only *Pitrs* and some *Asuras* who were not *Devas*. This is enough to indicate how in India from the finite and natural, men conceived of a region beyond their reach—a region which is infinite and supernatural, how gradually as the idea of the different *Devas* came to be unified, the conception of a transcending God who created the universe by his breath out of nothing, as it were, dwelling in a world high above—a different world from our own both in kind and in space, followed as a natural consequence.

3. The idea of immanence was of later growth and was the result of much philosophical speculation. Yet men could not give up the idea of a supernatural God, and the two ideas of immanence and transcendence got mixed up, as, in the well-known verse of the *R̥gveda*—

सहस्रशीर्षाः पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।

स भूमिं सर्वतो वृत्वाऽत्यतिष्ठद् दशाङ्गुलम् ॥ X. 90. 1.

Here the thousands of heads and eyes and feet of all animals that breathe on the earth are said to be the heads and eyes and feet of this Supreme Being who having covered every inch of space stands ten finger measure beyond it, i.e., transcends this universe. But before attaining the lofty heights of a transcendental philosophy which realises the unity of the

† Vide Max Müller's 'Origin of Religion' Lecture V.

universe and boldly recognises the essential and substantial oneness of Man on that basis, with God who is one with the universe, these flashes of religious instinct in man pass through many stages and phases of form and expression, and often get entangled in meshes of superstition to which primitive Man, on account of his want of experience, is naturally prone. These stages and phases, however, are discernible at every period of the world's history, for, at every period in this world, Man is found at all stages of evolution. And even in India, although the "highest summit of thought which the human mind has reached"* was attained in the ancient Upaniṣads, there was a constant climbing down in later times. This was inevitable, as it is even now, in religion, for the great bulk of mankind in every age cannot go much beyond the proposition that things *are* what they *seem to be*. So there must always be a lower form of apprehension for the majority of mankind. But it should be recognised also that there must be a higher form for those who are no longer 'spiritual babes' but have attained 'spiritual manhood.'

4. Great minds with clear religious instincts and foresight are born in every race and are hailed as world teachers during their lifetime. As long as they live, nothing else is wanted but their presence which is enough to solve all difficulties and clear all doubts. It is after their death that their sayings and doings are recalled by their disciples and followers sometimes with very great exaggeration. Incredible and extraordinary stories are circulated about the masters, and the more miraculous the events reported are, the greater are the adherents to the faith. An ignorant and credulous mass swarms round the sacred canon and swears to the superhuman and divine character of the scripture,† till preternatural revelation is claimed by the followers of every faith for its originator alone discounting and lowering all other faiths. The words of

*Max Müller's "Theosophy or Psychological Religion" P. 105

†Max Müller's "Science of Religion" Lecture. I.

the ancients are interpreted in more and more modern senses giving rise to schisms, factions and creeds. Kapila and Manu Plato and Aristotle have been dragged down to serve the purposes of the Schools.

Section II.—Methods of the Greek Philosophers—
leaning towards rational method.

5. European Philosophy traces its growth from the speculations of the early Greek Philosophers. The germs of modern Philosophy in Europe may therefore be mostly traced to the systems of the Greek Philosophers just as in India all subsequent schools of Philosophy may be found to be organically connected with the numerous currents of thought contained in the Upaniṣads. As regards the question of method of philosophical knowledge also their opinions and prejudices are the direct result of the influence of the Greek masters.

6. All Greek Philosophers almost without exception betray a strong prejudice for the rational method *per se*. This is traceable in the very earliest currents of Greek thought. Even the much hated school of Sophists for example apparently pleads for the cause of the rational method. The method of the Sophists however as we know is not the pure rational method. The Sophists in those days occupied very much the position of the lawyers of the present times. They were not wedded to any particular faith or belief and were prepared to plead the cause of any theory. What they concentrated on was the evolving of the art of forceful speaking, speaking that would influence the mass. The pure logical method under such circumstances would not always be paying. Good grammar, forceful style and therefore a thorough grounding in rhetorics are also essential factors for success in such an art.* Even in a school inspired with ideals so hostile to the development of the rational method we can trace a leaning towards it. After all rhetoric alone would not pay unless it is connected with con-

*Erdmann, History of Philosophy Vol. I. p. 71.

sistent and relevant thinking. The Greek mind has thus an innate preference for the rational method.

7. What applies to the Sophists applies with still greater force to other Greek thinkers. Socrates the father of Greek thought is associated with the founding of the dialectic method. The dialectic method as we know goes in for clear thinking. To make this possible Socrates evolves the special art of dialectics. Its principle is to convince an opponent of the illogicality of his views by putting him questions and thereby eliciting answers from him which are hostile to his own view. His great disciple Plato developed this dialectic method further and adopted it in the development of his philosophical system. His works are all in the form of dialogue. As regards his own views on the utility and ideals of this dialectic method he adopted, we may quote the following lines from Erdmann : "Dialectic as the art of conducting a conversation is opposed to the rhetoric of the Sophists, which only teaches how to represent persuasively the individual opinion of the speaker. In the dialogue on the other hand which consists in thinking in common and in mutual conviction, universally valid conceptions are attained. And as dialectic has to bring out the universal conception, the dialectic must be able to combine the particulars and thus show his synoptic powers. And the procedure by antinomies is the means alike of forming and of correcting concepts."*

8. The position of Aristotle with regard to this point is still more clear. He not only founded the first sciences but for the first time took up and developed Logic as a special discipline. In fact he developed and elaborated both the deductive and the inductive method. He specially evolved the syllogism as a vehicle for analytical reasoning. Aristotle thus not only adopts the rational method for establishing his Philosophy but specially developed this method by evolving Logic and thereby putting the rational method on a strong founda-

*Erdmann, History of Philosophy. Vol. I. p. 103.

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*Erdmann, History of Philosophy. Vol. I. p. 103.

tion. It is needless to add that after him it is the logical or rational method that has been accepted by all subsequent Greek philosophers for the pursuit of truth.

Section III.—Revelation—the Method of Scholastic Philosophers.

9. It is only with the middle ages that a change came upon this position. As soon as Christianity consolidated its position in Europe a remarkable change of outlook came upon the world of philosophical speculation. As the heir of classical culture and the depository of the instruments of salvation the Church established herself as the predominant power. To make her position safe she preached that there could be no science and no speculation outside of Church. The problem of philosophy was no more the search for truth or for the proof of the truth of the dogmas of the Church. To Philosophy was assigned the task of explaining the dogmas of the Church and deducing their consequence and demonstrating their truth. Philosophy in the middle ages thus came to be employed in the service of Faith in strengthening the belief in the religious dogmas dictated by the Church. A direct result of this new attitude to the rational method was the realisation of the need for supplementing the rational method by other methods such as intuition. The higher truths of religion and philosophy were found to be capable of revelation and in some cases it was thought that the ordinary rational method was either useless or impotent as an instrument of knowledge.

10. The philosophy of Thomas Aquinas has provided us with the best example of this viewpoint. This is apparent both from his views on morality as well as methods of knowledge. According to him the *Summum bonum* of man is the attainment of the greatest possible perfection or likeness to God. The supreme good for man is "beatitude" or blessedness which leads to the realisation of his true self. The highest

form of action, therefore, is contemplation of God. This contemplation is not akin to a rational process but more resembles a process of intuition where the glory of God is sought to be grasped in a direct act of mental perception. That is why it has been called "beatitude" a specialized kind of vision which brings God within the field of direct knowledge of man.

11. Elsewhere he discusses the relative merits and functions of the rational method and revelation. According to him there are certain aspects of God which cannot be grasped by reason, for example Trinity, Incarnation etc. Again what truths can be demonstrated by reason are also capable of being grasped through *revelation*. Thus *revelation* almost supersedes the rational method. As a matter of fact he thinks that for the believer in Christianity there is no need for the rational method at all as he can wholly depend on *revelation* for the knowledge of all truths. He however assigns a special function for reason. Where the non-believer is concerned mere reference to revelation will not be sufficient to convince him. Hence it is for such persons that there is special need for the rational method to demonstrate the truth of the dogmas.*

Secton III—Modern European Philosophy adopts rational method—Its limitations—Kant's absurd position.

12. The recognition of the need for this additional method was made under the peculiar circumstances. With the revival of Letters however these special circumstances were removed and with that the European genius showed its special preference for the rational method. Thus in modern Philosophy a greater emphasis has been laid on the question of the instrument of knowledge and its capacities, searching enquiries were made for ascertaining the origin, method and limits of knowledge and as a result Epistemology received special attention at the

*Erdmann—History of Philosophy Vol. I. p. 425.

hands of philosophers. Even then we have an interesting lesson to learn in the hands of Imanuel Kant the greatest modern Philosopher.

13. Kant was an out and out rationalist and with what rigour he pursued the principles of Logic in his search for a solid ground to meet the scepticism of Philosophy is very well in evidence in his Critique of Pure Reason. According to his own admission however this rational method did not lead him very far. Consistently with his method he arrived at the absurd finding that the noumenon, the supreme reality, the thing-in-itself is unknown and unknowable. According to his own findings the classical grounds so far employed by Theologians to prove the simple fact of the existence of God were not logically tenable. He has demonstrated this very thoroughly in the "Critique of Pure Reason." The impotence of reason to prove the existence of God made him despair as he had despaired never in the interest of morality. For he was a strong supporter of morality and for giving morality a strong sanction he felt the need for propounding the existence of God administering morality. In his despair, therefore, he had to call for the aid of other method than reason. This is why in his second book, the "Critique of Practical Reason", he propounded the principle of the "Primacy of the Practical Reason"—and on the strength of that posited the existence of God. This is a standing demonstration of the limitations of the rational method *per se*.

Section IV.—Bergson's Intuition—cause of its failure— Sādhana of Yoga Philosophy.

14. Other European Philosophers that followed Kant were not slow to realise this defect of the ordinary rational method. As a result a strong anti-intellectualistic movement developed of late in Western Philosophers. In ordinary perceptual knowledge the mind arranges and shapes sense data in the form of percepts. In mediate inferential knowledge also

the mind plays a still more important part by analysing experience and forming concepts and ultimately connecting them in the form of judgments. But the question arises whether reason can give to the mind, the true nature of reality. The rational method by its very nature is limited to the study and description of experience which at best gives us a mere approximation to truth. Intellect is by its very nature analytic and discursive and, therefore, can give us only a symbolic view. The rational method on account of its limitations studies reality piecemeal and so can never put us in direct touch with reality. At best it gives us a second hand knowledge, a mere translation, it represents reality and is incompetent as a method of acquiring knowledge. Naturally, therefore, an attempt was made to find out a new method which could present reality as a whole directly to us. A specialised form of perception which is of the nature of intuition and very much similar to the method of Sādhana or contemplation therefore came to find favour with them.

15. Bergson's philosophy may be taken as the most representative example of this new attitude. Bergson's philosophy is dualistic ; according to it reality is the manifestation of two dissimilar forces. On the one side there is a certain spiritual moving force which he calls the '*elan vital*' which expands its creative energy by traversing the other kind of reality which is nothing else but matter. Matter is a kind of immense immobile mass without memory and without the unifying principle of mind. Mind on the other hand is a force which is by nature free and essentially memory. It is in the nature of mind to add past to past, like a rolling snow-ball or a winding ball of thread, and at every moment to create and add something new to it. Life is mind using matter for its own manifestation. Matter plays the double role of an obstacle as well as a stimulus. Matter is inert and has practically very little elasticity in it and that is a great obstacle to mind in its attempt to organise and use it to produce living matter endowed with

memory and intellect. That is why in trying to put matter to use the mind becomes itself ensnared and its liberty is very much hampered and ultimately stifled. On the other hand consciousness avails itself of a certain elasticity in matter and turns it into its own use. "The animal performs voluntary movement by simply producing the infinitesimal spark, which sets off the potential energy stored up in food-stuffs."*

16. On account of the special conception of reality by Bergson as a living flowing creative process, he feels still more strongly the limitations of the ordinary rational method as an instrument of knowledge. The ordinary rational method is discursive, it treats reality piecemeal and so it is best suited for the purpose of knowing the dead world of matter which is static and devoid of life and is entirely governed by a process of absolute mechanism. That is why the rational method has been so successful in the field of the positive sciences. To the rational method thus Bergson gives a specialised function of dealing with the ordinary scientific knowledge. But the world of dead mechanical matter is not reality proper, for it is crystallized in death, it is the waste product of creation. The world of reality is properly manifested in living matter where consciousness resides and this matter is an ever moving creative process. The intellectual method on account of its very nature is incapable of penetrating the very husk of this living flowing reality, it can never place us in direct contact with this reality. "The rational method analyses reality and cuts it up, it translates the flowing time into space relations, it mechanises evolution which is purely creative and free." At best it gives us a translation of reality and never reality proper, it represents reality, it cannot present it.

17. The rational method according to him therefore, should be replaced by a better method which can give us a direct vision of reality. In fact it is the special function of

*F. Thilly's History of Philosophy, Sec. 73. p. 577—579.

Philosophy to find out such a method, which should be capable of giving us a direct vision of the real living, flowing, creative reality. Philosophy should be the art of comprehending the universe in its process, in its vital impetus. The special process should be more of the nature of a divining sympathy—of a feeling which goes direct to the heart of reality, than a thinking process with all the paraphernalia of its logic and analysis. "Our intuitions are something like instinct, a conscious refined spiritualised instinct, and instinct is still nearer life than intellect and science. The real, the becoming, the inward "*durée*", life and consciousness, we can apprehend only through the faculty of intuition."* Thus Bergson felt most acutely the need for supplementing the ordinary intellectual method of knowledge by a special method which is not rational and is of the nature of intuition.

18. It is needless to say that this intuition of Bergson by which he proposes to develop a sort of sixth sense for establishing direct contact of reality is very similar to the methods of *Dhyāna* or contemplation and *Sādhana* of the Indian philosophy. In Indian philosophy there has been a continuous tradition traceable to the very earliest times, emphasizing on the needs of *Sādhana* and *Dhyāna*. In the earliest Upaniṣads we can discover manifestations of distrust regarding the capacity of discursive reasoning to know ultimate reality. The following passage from the Kātha Upaniṣad will be relevant in this connection—

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।

यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तन् स्वाम् ॥ I. 2. 22.

"This *Ātman* is not attainable by rational process nor by intelligence nor by reading a great deal. Whomsoever it selects, to him this *Ātman* is approachable, to him it manifests its own self."

Here unmistakably the intellectual process is held at a discount

*Frank Thilly, History of Philosophy, Sec. 73. p. 578

and a man is advised to depend solely on revelation for the knowledge of Ātman. The idea of *Dhyāna* or contemplation has already been conceived at the time of the Upaniṣads and solemn statue-like aspects of nature are seen to be attributed with the quality of sitting in *Dhyāna*. The following passage from the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad will illustrate it—

ध्यानं वाव चित्ताद् यो ध्यायतीव पृथिवी ध्यायतीवान्तरिक्षं

ध्यायतीव द्यौ र्ध्यायन्तीवापो ध्यायन्तीव पर्वताः ।

VII. 6. 1.

“Contemplation is superior to consciousness. The earth seems to contemplate, the interspace seems to contemplate, the sky seems to contemplate, the waters seem to contemplate, the mountains seem to contemplate.” There is thus from the earliest times a strong preference in the Indian mind for a method of knowledge which is akin to intuition and dispenses with the discursive processes involved in the ordinary logical method.

19. The Yoga Philosophy we know took upon itself specially the task of developing and investigating into the possibilities of such a method. In fact the word Yoga itself means concentration. We find the use of this word liberally in the Vedic literature implying the restraint of the senses. These were also alluded to in the Upaniṣads including such old Upaniṣads as the Katha and the Śvetāśvatara. Even the two heterodox schools of Buddhism and Jāinism which rose in opposition to the Vedas accepted the validity and need for such practices. So there is a continuous tradition acknowledging the validity of such a non-rational method of acquiring knowledge. It is no wonder, therefore, that Patañjali in his Yogasūtra should take upon himself the task of prosecuting a special investigation regarding the possibilities of this method.

20. Patañjali conceives the cognitive faculty of mind as *Chitta*. He conceives it also as capable of assuming various stages or *Vṛtti* such as *Pramāṇa* i.e. ordinary perceptual stage of cognition of objects or inference etc., *Viparyaya* as when it is the dupe of an illusion, *Vikalpa* or abstraction and indulg-

ing in imagination, *Nidrā* or sleep and *Smṛti* or memory of past cognition. The purpose of Yoga is to secure mastery over the mind and by undergoing a special process of training to acquire a method of knowledge when the rational method is discarded and oneness with the Puruṣa as distinct from the Pradhāna is established. As preliminary disciplines it advises practice of *Yama* and *Niyama*.* The term *Yama* stands collectively for practice of bodily control by practising non-injury to others (*Ahimsā*), truthfulness (*Satya*), non-stealing (*Asteya*), sexual abstinence (*Brahmacharyya*) and avoidance of all that is superfluous for sustenance of life (*Aparigraha*). Similarly the term *Niyama* collectively stands for observance of some mental disciplines such as abstinence from speech (*Tapas*), reading of the Vedas (*Svādhyāya*) and meditation of God (*Īśvara-praṇidhāna*). Apart from this there are some moral disciplines. All this is by way of preliminaries which are calculated to qualify a man for practice of the Yoga method. When as a result of this, the mind becomes purified of all disturbing elements, the prospective Yogī has to assume a special *āsana* or posture which helps concentration and then to fix his mind on an object to attain the ultimate stage of *Samādhi*. This stage is reached through four intermediate stages. In course of these processes, the faculty of concentration, in an ascending order, fixes itself at first on grosser objects and then on finer objects until it reaches its highest stage of perfection in the final stage of *Samādhi*. Thus at first, it is in the stage of *Vitarka*, where gross objects form the subject matter of concentration ; then the five *tanmātras* forming the essence of the five gross elements are substituted as its subject matter in the *vichāra* stage ; then comes the stage of *ānanda* where the mind concentrates on its own faculties of knowledge ; and immediately preceding the stage of *samādhi* comes the stage of *Asmitā*. All these four stages have one common characteristic in that in them the mind concentrates on some object (*samprajñāta*).† In the ultimate stage of *Samādhi*,

**vide* Yoga Sūtras II. 29, 30, 32.

†*vide* Yoga Sūtras I. 79—99.

however, there is no object to concentrate on. It is at this stage that true knowledge is attained by *buddhi* becoming one with the pure Puruṣa. To successfully attain *Samādhi* it is also necessary to practise concentration. This is helped by practising *Prāṇāyāma*, a process in which the function of breathing is stopped and life process is made to continue without it for minutes, hours and even days together. Similarly the practice of *Dhāraṇa* helps concentration. This is fixing one's thought and attention specifically on a particular object to the exclusion of all other ideas and thoughts. The *Dhāraṇa* again is helped by an auxiliary process called *Dhyāna* or *abhyāsa* which means constant repetition of the same thought to the mind. To attain the special instrument of knowledge called *Samādhi* it is necessary, therefore, to undergo an elaborate process of preliminary training followed by the practice of a highly specialised technique including some auxiliary processes such as *Prāṇāyāma* and *Āsana*. This is after all an abnormal method and hence the need for such special training.

21. In this connection we make a reference to the special method of intuition introduced by Bergson in Western Philosophy. We may have marked that apart from denoting that the special method he employs is intuitional and something akin to instinct, he has not taken any great pains to give a detailed account of what it is like. He has practically left us in the dark about it. Moreover from the manner of his description it is quite apparent that this is quite an abnormal method and cannot but be a rare philosopher's gift. It was, therefore, all the more necessary to guarantee success to his method that he should have given attention to developing a special technique for attainment of this method. If he has been vague regarding the description of the nature of his method, he has kept us absolutely in the dark with regard to the question as to how to attain this method, what is the special technique of this method. It was necessary that some special technique in the lines of the Yoga Philosophy of Patn̄jali

should have been developed by him and this is where he has singularly failed. It is no wonder however that he has failed to do so. There was no tradition for such a method in Western Philosophy as in India and so he had no solid ground to build on. In fact he was doing pioneering work in the field and as such was faced with the difficult task of building absolutely on new grounds. Necessarily he failed to give a complete shape to his method and left it half done as it were. There was another factor which brought about the failure of his method. The European reader is not in touch with the workings of such a method and as such was not quite prepared to accept the soundness of this new method. He is used to the ordinary rational method adopted in the sciences and therefore has a strong prejudice against any new method which seeks to banish the discursive method and necessarily considers it unnatural and going against the grain. They in Europe, failed, therefore, to give this new method a warm welcome and in hostile circumstances this method of Bergson died most naturally and inevitably a premature death.

Section V—Śaṅkara's position—Anubhava—
supplemented by Sādhana and Dhyāna

22. Śaṅkara accepted the position common to Indian philosophers in general regarding their attitude to Yoga. The need for a general kind of meditation he felt as keenly as Patañjali. He also equally emphasised the need for a preliminary training to qualify a person for attaining higher esoteric knowledge of the Brahman. This has been made sufficiently clear in his commentary on the very first Sūtra of the Brahma-sūtras. Thus he observes—

तस्मात् किमपि वक्तव्यं यदनन्तरं ब्रह्मजिज्ञासोपदिश्यते इति । उच्यते,
नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः इहामुत्रार्थफलभोगविरागः शमदमादिसाधनसम्पत्, मुमुक्षुत्वञ्च ।
.....तस्मादथशब्देन यथोक्तसाधनसम्पत्त्यानन्तर्यमुपदिश्यते ।”

“So what is to be prescribed after which the questions about Brahman can be entertained ? It is stated : Knowledge

of discernment between the changing and the eternal, indifference to enjoyment of fruits of action in this world and the world to come, undergoing of disciplines like equanimity of mind and self-control etc. and desire for liberation."

23. Thus according to Śaṅkara practice of self-control was an indispensable preliminary for the study of the Brahman. This is not prompted by his individual caprice either. This is in conformity with the tradition and views maintained in the Upaniṣads which are the ultimate source of the Vedānta Philosophy.* Thus in the voice of the thunder the seer of the Upaniṣad discovers the following message: "तदेतदेवैषा देवी वागनुवदति स्तनयितुर्द द द इति दाम्यत दत्त दयध्वमिति" Br. Ā. Up. V. 2. 3.

"So this is what the divine voice speaks *da, da, da* i.e. practise self-control, charity and kindness" There is another passage in the Katha Upaniṣad which compares the senses to wild horses who are always inclined to run towards the objects of enjoyment. As such they are described as so many disturbing elements in our quest for knowledge of the highest truth. Therefore it pleads for the practice of control over the senses with the help of reason. So there is a continuous tradition for the development of the power of self-control by undergoing special discipline to the time of Śaṅkara. In advising the undergoing of bodily and mental disciplines, therefore, in his commentary, Śaṅkara only reaffirms an accepted instruction.

24. Regarding the means for the attainment of the

* *Vide Vivaranaprameyasangraha, Sutra I. Varnaka iii.*—

अतो नियतपूर्वैश्च पुष्कलकारणधीतनायानन्तर्यमेवायं शब्देनाभिधायितव्यम् etc. and again तन्नाधिकारि-विशेषणं चतुर्धा शास्त्रे प्रसिद्धम् etc. where it quotes the following Sruti: तदयमेव कर्मजितो लोकः चीयते etc., (Chh. Up. VIII. 1. 6.) आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति (Br. A. Up. II. 4. 5.) शान्तिं दान्त्त उपरतस्मिन्नुः etc. (Br. A. Up. IV. 4. 23.), and Sadananda quotes तस्मै स विद्वान् उपसन्नाय समग्रक प्रशान्तचित्ताय श्रमोन्नतिताय विनाशरं पुरुषं वेद सत्यं प्रोवाच तं तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम् (Mund. Up. I. 2. 13.) ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति (Mund. Up. III. 2. 9.) ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम् (Tait. Up. II. 1. 1.) in support of this in his Vedantasara (Sec. 15 and 17 of Jivananda's Edn.)

knowledge of the highest truth Śaṅkara has very little faith in the ordinary rational method. Ordinary reason he considered a very uncertain guide for leading us to the knowledge of Brahman. The Śruti as containing the revelation of the ultimate truth to the ancient seers was to him the most sound and authoritative guide. Thus in one place in his commentary on the Brahma Sūtras he observes : "And, therefore, mere reflection must not be quoted in opposition in a matter which is to be known by *Āgama*, for reflections which, without tradition rest only on the speculations of men, are untenable, since this speculation is unbridled. For instance, the reflections thought out by some experts after great trouble are recognised by others, still more expert, as merely apparent, and those of the latter in the same way by others. Therefore one cannot rely on it that reflections have stability, because the opinions of men vary. But when there is a man of recognised greatness, a Kapila or another, who has made a reflection one could at least rely on it as well-founded. Even here a sound foundation is lacking, since even the recognised pioneers such as Kapila, Kaṇāda and the like openly contradict each other."

25. Śaṅkara thus finds it very difficult to place reliance on the rational method on account of the contradictory results it leads to. There are no two men who agree on the same point and the more one proceeds on rational method the greater is the bewilderment caused. The following lines of Browning from his "Rabbi Ben Ezra," I think, voice the arguments of Śaṅkara on this controversial point in a very beautiful manner :

"Now who shall arbitrate ?
 Ten men love what I hate,
 Shun what I follow, slight what I receive ;
 Ten, who in ears and eyes
 Match me : we all surmise
 They, this thing, and I, that : whom shall
 my soul believe ?"

So it is not safe to rely on reason as our guide for at best it leads to mere surmises which may or may not be true. On the other hand, the Śruti to him is the embodiment of direct revelation of Brahman and as such it is most reliable authority available for him.

26. This is not the only consideration on which he rejects the pretences of the logical method of knowledge to know ultimate reality. He gives another very cogent reason. This is based on the fact that the subject matter of knowledge in this case is a specially complicated one and as such the logical method is unsuitable for the realisation of such knowledge. Thus Śaṅkara observes in his commentary: "Even though it appears that in many provinces, reflection is well-founded, yet, in the province here spoken of, reflection cannot be freed from the reproach of baselessness ; for it is impossible to know at all this extremely profound essence of Being, without Āgama, connected with liberation ; for, this subject does not fall within the province of perception, because it is without form and the like and therefore, also not within the province of inference and the other Pramāṇas because it has no characteristic and the like."* The ordinary rational method knows by attributing some predicate to the subject matter of knowledge but the ultimate reality is of such nature that no quality or concept can be predicated of it ; so the ordinary logical method is impotent here. To be within the province of its grasp its subject matter must be something which is limited—which is relative ; but the ultimate reality in his conception is absolute—is unlimited by any attributes—is without any characteristics. So logically the Absolute remains outside the scope of the rational method. This is an echo of similar ideas contained in the passages of the Upaniṣads. One example will suffice. Thus in chapter IV of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Yājñavalkya says to Māitreyī, "येनेदं सर्वं विजानाति तं

केन विजानीयाद् * * * विज्ञातारमरे केन विजानीयादिति ॥”* “By whom all this is known, how are we to know Him, how are we to know the great Knower himself ?” The Brahman is conceived by the Upaniṣads and therefore by Śaṅkara as the attributeless, unbounded essence of intelligence. The ordinary method of knowledge can work only where there is the duality of the subject and the object. But the Brahman in its essence is one without a second, there is no object for Him to perceive and as such the discursive method of knowledge has no application to it.

27. To the Philosopher who knows only of the rational method of knowledge the inevitable logical conclusion would be that in such a case the ultimate reality should be accepted as unknowable. As a matter of fact philosophers like Kant and Herbert Spencer who had faith only in the rational method of knowledge, came exactly to this conclusion and accordingly developed the theory of Agnosticism. But Śaṅkara had faith in other methods of knowledge and so he did not despair of the impotency of reason to lead one on to the ultimate reality. Intuition and revelation, he thought, were special methods for attaining this knowledge. We had better quote his own words from his commentary on this point. “In the scripture the Brahman is rooted ; in the scripture it has its ground of knowledge, not in sense-perception and the like ; therefore it must be taken as the scripture gives it ; and the scripture teaches of the Brahman both that it is not wholly used up in forming of the world-appearance and that it is yet without parts. Nay, even in the case of worldly things, such as amulets shells, drugs and the like, it happens that, in virtue of difference of place and time and cause, they manifest powers with various contradictory effects, and even these cannot be known by mere reflection without instruction, nor can it be determined what powers, with what accompaniments, referring to what, for what available object, a given thing may have,—how

can it then be possible to know the nature of the Brahman, with its unthinkable perfections of might without the scripture ?”

28. Śaṅkara does not therefore, take upon himself the task of proving the existence of Brahman or the attributes of Brahman. He took the statements in the *Śrutis* as sufficient evidence of their proof and there was no additional need of demonstrating their truth with the help of reason or logical arguments. If, however, one desires to have a direct perception of the supreme reality, this can be done not by mental reconstruction of reason but by a process which is very similar to the process of *Samādhi* as practised in Yoga philosophy. It is a process of intuition to which he gives the name of *Anubhava*. This *anubhava* is an intuitional consciousness of reality where the distinction of the subject and the object does not exist. In this process of intuition thought becomes one with reality and the individual shakes off its individuality, the apparent duality is gone and the mind finds itself steeped into the very heart of reality where it can hear its heart-throbs, in an act of direct perception. He calls it *Sākṣātkāra* or direct perception as reality here is brought in direct contact with the knower. “This knowledge by intuition (*anubhava*)* is not to be confused with indeterminate sensation. It is higher even than mediate reflective knowledge. It is of the nature of artistic intuition. It is real perception, and all devotion, training and study is meant for preparing the mind for this kind of intuition.”

29. Thus we get an additional source of knowledge as supplementing the revelation of the *Śrutis*. The scripture gives us a second-hand knowledge though absolutely reliable

*This is what is called *Aparokshanubhūti* (just a consciousness which is the essence of the Self). *vide Vivaranaprimeyasamgrahah, Sut. I. Varnaka i. on “Anubhava”* and also the remark at the conclusion वेदान्तशब्दस्य च ब्रह्मापरोक्षावगतिहेतुत्वं तं त्वौपनिषदं पुरुषं प्रवृत्तामीति (Br. A. Up. III. 9. 26). तद्धितप्रतायेण दर्शितम् * * * तथा शब्द एव प्रथमं ब्रह्मणि परोक्षज्ञानमुत्पाद्य पुनर्वर्णि तत्प्रतिबन्धश्चापेक्षया द्वितीयमपरोक्षज्ञानमुत्पादयति etc.

but if we want to have a first-hand direct knowledge of reality as it is we must seek the aid of *Anubhava* or intuition which has been already described above. Thus Śaṅkara observes in his commentary : "For in the investigation of the Brahman, the scripture is not, as in *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā*, the exclusive authority, but the authorities here are, according to circumstances, the scripture and intuition (*Anubhava*) and the like. For the knowledge of the Brahman reaches its final point in perception as far as it refers to a really existing subject."

30. It is to be noted in this stage that the attitude of Śaṅkara is fully in keeping with the spirit of the extant Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads always entertained great doubts as to the capacity of the reasoning faculty of mind in knowing ultimate reality, nor had they any great faith even in vast reading but they believed in revelation which is prompted more by divine grace than any regulated law guaranteeing certainty. Thus in the *Kena Upaniṣad* we get the following passage :

न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग् गच्छति नो मनः । न विद्वो न विजानीमो
यथैतदनुशिष्यात् ॥ अन्यदेव तद्विदितादथो अविदितादधि । इति शुश्रुम पूर्वेषां ये
नस्तद्व्याचचक्षिरे ॥ 1. 3. and 4.

"The eye does not reach there, nor word, nor mind ; nor can we know or gather information how it is to be known ; it is different from what is known and again from what is unknown. This is what we hear from our ancestors who have described it."

The passage in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* quoted in para 18 above makes this position still clearer for it is said there—

"This *Ātman* is not grasped by discourse, nor by intelligence, nor by vast reading. Whomsoever it favours, it is approachable by him and to him alone it manifests its body."

31. Thus the discursive method of knowledge is held completely at discount in the Upaniṣads. Below we shall quote another passage from the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* which not only holds the impotence of reason for purpose of knowing

ultimate reality but also emphasises the need for intuitional process (Dhyāna) :

न चक्षुषा गृह्यते नापि वाचा नान्यैर्देवैस्तपसा कर्मणा वा ॥ ज्ञानप्रसादेन
विशुद्धसत्त्वस्तु तं पश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमानः ॥ Muṇḍ Up. III. 1. 9.

“It cannot be taken by the eye, nor by words nor through the grace of other gods, nor asceticism, nor work. A person who has purified himself by the attainment of knowledge can see the attributeless by intuition.”

32. This will be sufficient for the purpose of substantiating the statement that the position that Śaṅkara maintains is no new doctrine of his own but is fully warranted by the various passages contained in the Upaniṣads. This observation applies more or less to all the special points of his philosophy as we shall make clear in course of this book.

33. It is not that Śaṅkara altogether refused to recognise any utility in the ordinary discursive method of knowledge at all. As an exoteric method it has very valuable duties to perform. Even for esoteric purposes it has also its own place, not the place of supreme importance ascribed to it by ordinary philosophers, but the subordinate place of service of revelation.* In this connection we may recall the observation we made regarding the attitude of Thomas Aquinas to the rational method. He attributed to it the minor function of convincing the heathen of the truth of the dogmas established by revelation. As an esoteric method Śaṅkara ascribes to it practically the same function. Thus according to him the knowledge of

*Cf. Suresvaracharyya's Br. A. Up. Bhashya Varttika, Introduction, Sl. 166.

कारकव्यवहारे हि शुद्धं वस्तु न वीक्षते ।

शुद्धं वस्तुनि सिद्धे च कारकव्यावृत्तिस्तथा ॥

also the Varttika on Br. A. Up. I. 4, Sl. 313.

काकीलू कनिशेवायं स'सरोऽन्नाम्बेदिनीः ।

या निशा सर्वधृतानामितावीचत् स्वयं हरिः ॥

(vide Srimadbhagavadgita, II. 69.)

Brahman is gathered from the scripture but the rational method can demonstrate the truth of this knowledge by showing that these dogmas of revelation do not contradict the perceived world of reality. The rational method has no authority to question the truth of revealed knowledge but to serve it by demonstrating its truth to the lay men. Thus Śaṅkara observes in his commentary : "The knowledge of the Brahman is gained by the sense of the word of the Veda being considered and determined ; it is not gained by other means of knowledge, such as inference. But although it is the Vedānta texts which inform us of the cause of the world's coming into existence etc, yet to make sure that we have grasped their sense correctly, an inference which does not contradict the words of the Vedānta is not excluded as a means of knowledge. For, by the scripture itself reflection is called in as a help."

34. In the exoteric world of duality Śaṅkara concedes the supremacy of the rational method. "It has its value in the practical sphere of life. It holds good of the ordinary life, where the distinction of the subject and the object has to be taken as an accepted fact. Discursive knowledge holds good in this world of empirical existence." Logic and reason apply specially to the stage of duality where there is the distinction of subject and object, but ultimate reality transcends this state of duality. It is present only to itself and there is no scope for reason there. This will be made clear from the following passage taken from the introduction of Śaṅkara's commentary on the Brahmasūtra :

"Without the delusion that 'I' and 'mine' consist in the body, sense organs and the like, no knower can exist ; and consequently no use of the means of knowledge is possible.....
.....consequently the means of knowledge, perception and the rest, belong to the province of Avidyā."*

*See also his Bhashya on Br. Sū. II. 1. 14. सर्वव्यवहाराणामिव प्राग् जन्मात्म-
विज्ञानात् सत्तास्वीयपक्षः स्वप्नव्यवहारस्यैव प्राक् प्रतीयमानः । All empirical experiences are true
until an identity with Brahman is known, as are dream experiences until
awakening.

Section VI—Śaṅkara's Analysis of Knowledge & Truth.

35. Let us now examine Śaṅkara's view about knowledge and how it arises. The senses according to him are derived from the elements and so is the *antaḥkaraṇa*, in which *tejas* predominates giving it an unstable character which causes it to flow out through a sense and to take the form of an object. Thus the *antaḥkaraṇa* is ever active and may become latent only in states like *Suṣupti* (deep sleep). The forms assumed by the *antaḥkaraṇa* in perceptions are known as its *Vṛttis*. All the senses involve the association of a physical apparatus and a psychical principle which constantly interact in our experiences. The psychical element is wholly inactive, and the seeming activity it manifests is accountable to its physical accompaniment. It is called the *Sākṣin* (literally 'witness' or 'perceptient') the passive on-looker of the activities of the internal organ. "It appears never by itself but always in association with the internal organ in its latent or manifest form. The reverse also is true and no internal organ is conceivable without involving a reference to some *Sākṣin* or other."* The two combined form the *Jīva* or the empirical self that knows feels and wills. The combination endures in one form or another till the time of release,—when the internal organ is merged in its source, *Māyā*, and the *Sākṣin*, losing its character as such, is identified with Brahman, the sole reality acknowledged. The *Jīva* differs from *Sākṣin* in this that the former may be the object of self consciousness on account of the objective complement of *antaḥkaraṇa* in it, while the latter can never be an object being "the pure element of awareness in all knowing." But because it cannot be known, it does not follow that it cannot be realized, for being self-evident by nature, it does not require to be made known at all. It is revealed in every experience as a pre-existing knower—an abiding *Pramāṇa* of all proofs without any aid†

*M. Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 343.

† *Vide Panchadasi*—इदमेव स्वप्रमत्तं यद्वाचं साधनैर्विना । XI. 32(2).

—an *adhiṣṭhātā* which is not limited (*Viśiṣṭa*), like *Jīva*, by the activities of *antaḥkaraṇa*, though *antaḥkaraṇa* is its mark (*Upādhi*).* A distinctive feature related to *kārya* (activity) is a *Viśeṣaṇa* or determinant ; while not so related, it is *Upādhi* or adjunct. Thus when we ask a person to see a blue lotus—the *blueness* is apprehended along with the lotus in the action of seeing—which is, therefore, a *Viśeṣaṇa* ; but when we ask a person to go to a house ‘on which crows are flying’—the mark of flying crows is an *Upādhi* because it is not connected with the action of going which concerns the house only apart from the flying crows. The *Antaḥkaraṇa*, being unconscious (*Jada*), cannot illumine an object, and is, therefore, an *Upādhi* of the conscious *Sākṣin* which does so. The *Jīva*, however, which has the *Antaḥkaraṇa* as a determinant is never dissociated from it in any action. It is “spirit immanent in the *Antaḥkaraṇa*” while the *Sākṣin* is “spirit transcending the *Antaḥkaraṇa*.”

36. In Advāita philosophy, knowledge has two elements : the *Vṛtti* element of the internal organ which is contingent and the element of consciousness which is eternal, being intrinsically Brahman itself, but which seems characterized by change on account of its association with the *Vṛttis*. The *Vṛtti-jñāna* or empirical knowledge is the result of the interaction of subject and object, having for its substratum a pure awareness which is always present and which it is impossible to think away, and which never ceases even in our deep sleep when a consciousness of bliss persists.

37. Knowledge may again be direct (*aparokṣa*, not mediate) or indirect (*parokṣa*, mediate). It is direct when the image of the object is presented to the *Sākṣin* immediately by the *Vṛttis* of the *antaḥkaraṇa* in which the *Sākṣin* is

*So in *Vedantaparibhashā* Ch. I. p. 63, (Krishnanath Nyaya-panchanan's Edn.)—तत्र जीवो नामान्तःकरणवच्छिन्नचैतन्यम् । तत्साक्षी तु अन्तःकरणीयवृत्तिचैतन्यम् । etc.

immanent. It need not be sensory perception to be direct*, for there may be immediate knowledge even without such perception. The empirical self, for instance, is immediately known though it cannot be presented to any sense. So are all mental states, *e. g.* pleasure, pain etc. The knowledge is indirect where the image and the presentation are not identical, not being coeval in time, as in memory knowledge, or depending on ratiocination, as in inference and so on. External objects, if perceivable and present at the time, may or may not be directly known but internal states fulfilling those two conditions are necessarily known immediately. To these two kind of objects must be added a third entity—the empirical ego (Ahampadārtha) which, as the subject of all perceptions, never remains unrevealed, though not quite explicitly, for all knowledge alike involves a reference to it; and since the Jīva is never without consciousness of some kind or other, the consciousness of self becomes a constant factor. “It is this sense of self that explains how one person is able to distinguish his experience from that of others”†

38. All knowledge, in the common acceptance of the term, according to Śāṅkara, involves an object as well as a subject.‡ There can be no knowledge without an object. “The barren woman’s son” “the round square” are unreal (asat) and are, therefore, incapable of being apprehended. The Advaitin assumes that there is an object even in the so-called illusion, since it can be apprehended and is not unreal. This object, however, differs in type from non-illusory objects, “Objects of illusion are not common to several or general, their presence not being vouched for by collective experience. The serpent which a person sees in the dark where there is only a rope

*Cf. *Vedānta Paribhasha* (K. Nyayapañchanan’s Edn.) p. 26.
न हीन्द्रियजन्यत्वेन ज्ञानस्य साक्षात्त्वम् । etc. For conditions to be fulfilled for direct knowledge, See. Ch. I.

†M. Hiriyanna’s *Outline of Indian Philosophy*. p. 347.

‡*Vide Br. Sū. II. 2. 28. S. Bhashya.*

is special to him and may not be seen by others. It may, therefore, be described as 'private' or personal to him, while objects of common knowledge such as a real serpent are 'public' for they are cognized by others as well."* These two types differ also in their abiding character. An object of illusion could not have existed before our apprehension nor can it last after our apprehension ceases. It comes to exist and ceases to be with our illusory knowledge. But the object of ordinary knowledge may exist before or after our apprehension. A dream object 'is of the illusory type and differs from that of the waking state in the same way. Error, in the light of this distinction, would arise when different types of things are related in a judgment, as pointed out in *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, (K. Nyāyapañchānana's Ed. p. 92) वृत्तिद्वयप्रतिबिम्बितचैतन्यस्यैकस्य सत्यमिथ्यावस्तुतादात्म्यावगाहित्वेन भ्रमत्वस्वीकारात् । "Where the one consciousness reflected by two Vṛttis involves the identity of two types of objects, the phenomenal and the apparent, there is error."† This is what Śaṅkara calls 'Adhyāsa', "an illegitimate transference." In the example of illusion, this is a snake, the 'this' (i.e. rope) is empirically real, while the 'snake', superimposed, is apparently so. The superimposed is considered less real than the substratum, because the knowledge of the former is contradicted by that of the latter. This happens only when we become aware of the disparity between the objects related in our prior knowledge on closer examination. Our knowledge of the rope as rope being empirical is not sublated like that of the snake ; and hence it destroys our illusion. The relation between the terms in the example is not identity proper, for they are of different levels. Still it cannot be difference either, for then they could not have been the subject and predicate of the same judgment. Śaṅkara rules out the relation of identity-in-difference as inconceivable being self-contradictory. He regards this relation as unique (*anirvachanīya*) and calls it '*Tādātmya*'

*M. Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 350.

†Cf. S. Bhāṣya, Introduction to *Br. Sūtr.* अज्ञाननिमित्तः सत्तादृशे मिथुनीकता नैसर्गिकोऽयं लोकवावहारः ।

('sole'-ness). It is not real because it obtains between terms belonging to two different planes. Fall from a tree in a dream will not actually break the bones. At the same time it is not unreal either, for it is experienced. No experience according to Śaṅkara is unreal. The relation, therefore, is, like the illusory object, *Prātibhāsika* (apparent)—not empirical. The relation is such that a denial of the higher term implies the denial of the lower but not *vice versa*. If the rope is not, the snake is not ; but the negation of the snake does not imply the negation of the rope. For this reason Śaṅkara calls it 'Ananyatvam' (not being other than the substratum) which he explains as 'Vyatirekeṇa abhāvaḥ'* (absence in negation *i.e.* absence in the absence of the ground). The rope might exist without illusion (snake), but the illusion (snake) never exists without the ground (rope). This confusion between two types of beings is brought about by *Avidyā* which functions in a double capacity,—it first suppresses or conceals the nature of the object and then substitutes another in its place. As these functions are positive, *avidyā* is held to be positive and not a mere absence of knowledge. There is a malapprehension of the ground which is present and not a lack of apprehension. "It is the contrary of *Vidyā*, not its contradictory ; and the condition for the resulting error to disappear is the removal of *avidyā* which happens when *vidyā* arises in the self-same person in regard to the self-same object."† This apprehension of an object as what it is not (*अतस्मिंस्तद्वबुद्धिः*) is called *Adhyāsa*. Śaṅkara maintains that in the plurality of the empirical universe too there is an *Adhyāsa* which springs, not from personal *avidyās*, but from a radical *Māyā*, which is the source not only of the common order of nature but also of all personal *avidyās* which are dependent on the same source. Thus when *Māyā* or *Mūlāvidyā* (the radical ignorance) is overcome in *Mokṣa* both realms of objective being disappear.

* S. Bhashya on Br. Sut. II. 1. 14. So says Vachaspati in *Bhāmati*
—न खलु अनन्तत्वमिति अमेदं ब्रूमः किन्तु मेदं वासिष्ठान् ।

† M. Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 354.

39, About Truth, Śaṅkara as an idealist, of course raises the principle of non-contradiction (abādhitva) to 'the position of high court judge'* but with some reservation. According to him an experience as such may be true although its contents are false, as in dreams the contents are proved to be false on waking, but not that we had such experiences.† Again the ground of dream experiences, the individual Jīva, is true, as he is not set aside on waking. In experiences where a shell is mistaken for silver, the silver disappears on scrutiny and is therefore a Bhrama (error) while the shell is Pramā (truth). This latter may prove a delusion from a higher standpoint, but truth and error are after all categories of the empirical plane, and it is enough when a thing justifies its claim for truth throughout empirical life. That knowledge is true in the ultimate reality requires no proof, for by its very nature it is so. It is what is called inherently valid (Svataḥ pramāṇam). In mokṣa where nothing but Brahman remains, all pramāṇa as such including that of the Vedas and even of the Upaniṣads must disappear. A relatively true means leads to an absolutely true end, just as a dream snake might cause actual throbbing of the heart and perspiration through fear which persists even when awake. According to Śaṅkara there can be no error but has a ground of truth of which it is only an appearance.

*L. A. Reid, Knowledge and Truth, p. 3.

†Vide S. Bhashya on Br. Sūtr. II. 1. 14. न हि स्वप्नादुत्थितस्य स्वप्नदृष्टं मिथ्येति मन्यमानस्तदवगतिमपि मिथ्येति मन्यन्ते कश्चित् ।

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A STUDY OF SĀṆKARA

CHAPTER III

The Doctrine of Identity

Section I—The Doctrine as developed by Śaṅkara

1. In the Tāîtiriya Upaniṣad there runs the following line : यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । येन जातानि जीवन्ति । यत् प्रपन्त्य-
मिसंविशन्ति तद्विजिज्ञासस्व । तद्ब्रह्मेति । From whom these creatures
are born, by whom after being born live and that to which
they return and enter, ask for that—that is Brahman.* In
shaping his monistic theory of the universe Śaṅkara takes his cue
from this observation. The plurality of the world of experience
subject to constant change, destruction and replacement, he traces
to one single cause, namely Brahman. Thus he observes in
his commentary on Brahmasūtra† “अस्य जगतः नामरूपाभ्यां व्याकृतस्यानेक-
कर्तृ भोक्तृ संयुक्तस्य प्रतिनियतदेशकालनिमित्तक्रियाफलाश्रयस्य मनसाप्यचिन्त्यरचना-
रूपस्य जन्मस्थितिभङ्गं यतः सर्वज्ञात् सर्वशक्तेः कारणाद् भवति तद्ब्रह्मेति
वाक्यशेषः ।” “The implication is that the all-powerful all-knowing
principle from which the creation, maintenance, and destruction
of this world divided into names and forms, containing many
agents and many enjoyers, always subject to activities brought
about by space and time, the plan of which cannot be conceived
even by the mind, take place is Brahman.”

2. It is thus concluded that Brahman is the ultimate
cause of this world of plurality and flux. But cause is usually
talked of in two distinctly separate senses. In the case of
a pot the cause is in one sense the clay out of which it is made
and in another sense the agent in the person of the potter
who gave it shape. Similarly in the case of a gold ornament,

*Tāîtiriya Up. III. 1.

†Brahmasūtra Bhashya I. 1. 2.

gold is in one sense the cause and in another sense the goldsmith is the cause. The first set of cause is the material out of which the article is made and therefore it may be called the material cause or *Upādāna Kāraṇa*. The second set of cause is the agent who transforms the matter into the particular shape of an article. He is the efficient cause or *Nimitta Kāraṇa*. The question necessarily arises in what sense is Brahman the cause of the world of perception.

3. Thus Śaṅkara tackles the problem in this manner :
 *On empirical study it appears that Brahman is only the efficient cause of the universe because there are sayings in the Upaniṣads which go to signify that Brahman first formed a desire and then started creating this world ; for example in the Praśna Upaniṣad† we get the passage. “स ईक्षां चक्रे कस्मिन्नहम् उत्क्रान्त उत्क्रान्तो भविष्यामि कस्मिन् वा प्रतिष्ठिते प्रतिष्ठास्यामीति ।” This kind of purposive creation is usually noticed in case of efficient causes, such as the agency of the goldsmith in making a gold ornament. In such a case he first makes up his mind to cast gold into a certain shape and then he reduces gold to such shape. But such a theory would land us in difficulties, for in that case the character of Brahman as the sole source of all creation cannot be maintained. There will, in that case, be the need for positing a separate material cause of creation as is usually done in anthropomorphic conceptions of cosmology. Hence it is to be maintained that Brahman is both the material and efficient cause of the universe. To propound this theory Śaṅkara does not have recourse to logical reason for he has very little respect for such discursive method as we have already shown in the previous chapter. He has greater faith in revelation as recorded in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads ; and so he establishes this on the strength of the statements recorded in the Upaniṣads.

4. Thus there is the statement in the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad. “यथा सोम्य एकेन मृत्पिण्डेन सर्वं सृज्यते विज्ञातं स्याद्

*Sankarabhashya I. 4. 26.

†Praśna VI. 3.

वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम्;... एकेन नखनिकृन्तनेन सर्व्वं कार्पायसं विज्ञातं स्यात्।”* etc. “Just as, O Somya, by knowing one lump of clay all that is made of clay becomes known, the product depends only on name, it is a name, while clay alone is the reality, by knowing one nail-parer all that is made of steel becomes known etc.” By implication, therefore, it is meant that Brahman forms the material cause of all that there is in this universe† just as clay forms the material of all articles of clay. As proof he says that it is noted in the Upaniṣads that by knowing Ātman, which is in Vedānta Philosophy identical with Brahman, all that there is, becomes known. The reference is to the famous passage in the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad आत्मनि खलुरे दृष्टे श्रुते मते विज्ञात इदं सर्व्वं विदितम्। When the *Ātman* is seen, heard, cognized and known all this becomes known. The assumption that the Brahman is the material cause of the universe necessarily lands us into the difficulty regarding the agency through which this transformation is to be accomplished. Is it to be explained with the help of a third factor which should be the efficient cause? By all means no. To this position Śaṅkara drives his conclusion by a clever manner of argument. He refers to the passage यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते etc, and shows that the Upaniṣads herein recognize Brahman as supplying not only the passive material but also the active source which brings about this transformation and thereby precludes the need for positing a third principle. From this authority Śaṅkara observes that Brahman should be conceived as a material cause which does not stand in the need for an external agent as is necessary in the case of earthen pots or gold ornaments.‡

*Chhāndogya Up. VI. 1. 4—6.

†तच्च उपादानकारणविज्ञाने सर्व्वविज्ञानं सम्भवति उपादानकारणावातिरेकात् कार्यस्य S. Bhashya I. 4. 23.

‡निमित्तत्वं तु अधिशब्दन्तरभावादधिगन्तव्यम्। यथा हि लोके स्तु सुवर्णं दिकमुपादानकारणं कुलाल-सुवर्णकारादीनविशद्वृत्तेष्वपि प्रवर्तते, नैव ब्रह्मण उपादानकारणस्य। शारीरकभाष्यम्। I. 4. 23.

Vide also Śaṅkaras' discussion of this उपादानत्वम् in Tait. Up. I. 1. 2.

5. The statement that Brahman is both the formal and material cause of the universe is likely to mislead one to conceive that Brahman is the cause of the manifold world of experience and in that sense Brahman is both one as a cause and many as the consequent effect of it, it is both one and many at the same time. According to such thinkers Brahman can be imagined like a tree with many branches which from the point of view of the tree as a whole is one and from the point of view of branches it consists of many. It may similarly be compared to the sea which is made up of the many waves or to the clay things which from the point of view of the material of which they are composed are one but as forming distinct forms are many at the same time. Śaṅkara asks us to steer clear of such a mistake. Brahman according to his interpretation is not a single principle which is reducible to many but it is one single principle which for ever remains one without a second. For authority for such a conception of the Brahman Śaṅkara refers to such passages of the Upaniṣads as ब्रह्मैवेदं सर्वम् (Mund. Up. II. 2. 12.) आत्मैवेदं सर्वम् (Chh. Up. VII. 25. 2.) नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन (Br. Ā. Up. IV. 4. 19.).

6. Such a position again is inconsistent. As we are aware of the principle of causality in the world of phenomena, the cause or the antecedent event becomes transformed into the consequent event or effect. The cause is necessarily equal to the effect but all the same cause and effect are distinctly different. If they were not considered and perceived as different there is no meaning in applying different terms to each, for we might as well hold that what we call effect is but a continuation of the cause. Śaṅkara will not be reconciled to such a position. According to him Brahman is not stated to be the cause of this manifold world of phenomena in the same sense. As a matter of fact Brahman is identical with the world of phenomena which it causes, it is the same as the world of phenomena. The world is a plurality but Brahman is a unity and still they are identical. This plurality is only apparent

and not real, it is mere appearance, it is the work of distortion effected by *Avidyā* or Nescience. In reality the world of phenomena is the same as the one Brahman, it is our ignorance or *Avidyā* that makes us read a plurality here. It is a plurality only in name and not intrinsic.*

7. Thus, according to the view of Śaṅkara, Brahman is the sole cause of this creation. This is so not in the ordinary sense of causality in which the cause becomes transformed to something new and different from the nature of the cause from which it came. Brahman is to be looked upon as identical with the world of phenomena. Apparently it does not look like that on account of the presence of ignorance which distorts our perception but intrinsically it is identical with Brahman. To make his point clear, Śaṅkara maintains with the Sūtrakāra in the Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa, an identity of existence between the cause and the effect which are not as essentially different as they appear. The difference is only in the manifestation—the appearance. The becoming many is by manifestation in name and form of that which existed in unmanifested condition in it. The name and form, however, unfold in all situations without abandoning their original nature and without separating from Brahman, either in space or time. This unfolding is due to *Māyā*, the *Ātmaśakti* of Brahman which is a positive (भावरूपं यत्किञ्चित्) something not describable either as *Sat* or *Asat*. We shall deal with this category later on in a separate chapter (Ch. V.). Indeed the ordinary notion of causality, according to Śaṅkara is inapplicable to the ultimate reality.

Section II—Āchāryyas Rāmānuja, Madhva, Vallabha and Nimbārka criticised and contrasted with Śaṅkara.

8. Let us now test the correctness of this interpretation

*अमुपगम्य चेमं व्यावहारिकं भोक्तृभोग्यलक्षणं विभागं स्थानोक्तवदिति परिहारीभिहितः न त्वयं विभागः परमार्थतोऽस्ति यस्मात्तयोः कार्यकारणयोः अनन्तलसवगम्यते । कार्यमाकाशादिकं बहुप्रपञ्चं जगत्, कारणं ब्रह्म, तस्मात् कारणात् परमार्थतोऽनन्तत्वं व्यतिरेकिणभावः कार्यस्यावगम्यते ।यतो वाचारम्भश्च विकारी नामधेयं वाचैव केवलमस्तीत्यारभ्यते विकारी घटः शराव उदञ्चनं चेति । न तु वस्तुवत्त्वेन विकारी नाम कश्चिदस्तीति । (शरीरकमाध्यम्) II. 1, 14.

of the Brahma Sūtra which is the same as the interpretation of the Upaniṣadic Philosophy for after all the Brahma Sūtra proposes only to systematise the Upaniṣads. It is irrelevant in this connection to consider the question of the excellence of this interpretation as a philosophical theory of the question of being, in contrast with other interpretations of other commentators of the Brahmasūtra. We would rather consider how far it is faithful as a literal interpretation of the texts of the Upaniṣads as contrasted with other similar interpretations. We may also note at this stage for purpose of avoiding future misconception that we propose to use texts for this purpose only from the old and extant Upaniṣads *i. e.* mainly the Upaniṣads which have been commented on by Śaṅkara, for this fact itself carries proof that they are extant Upaniṣads. The other numerous books which pass as Upaniṣads shall be left completely out of account as it is a well known fact that they are of the nature of subsequent additions by representatives of various sectarian schools in their attempt to give their view the look of authority and antiquity by dressing them up in the garb of Upaniṣads.

9. For a comparative study of Śaṅkara's interpretation we shall take up the views of the following commentators of the Vedānta : Rāmānuja, Madhvāchāryya, Vallabha and Nimbārka. We shall start in the same order as noted above.

10. According to Rāmānuja the individuals and the world of inanimate objects are not mere appearance but real ; they are part of Brahman. In fact they form the body and the attributes of the supreme spirit and as such are incapable of existence apart from it. What the ordinary body is to the individual soul, the world of phenomena is to the supreme soul. He thus admits the non-duality of the supreme soul in a modified form in that he makes the individual soul and inanimate objects as well a part of it. Hence the special name of his doctrine as Viśiṣṭādvāitavāda. Like Śaṅkara he admits that Brahman is both the material and the efficient cause of the

universe but in a different way. The creation of the universe is merely a transformation of the Brahman from a subtle state to a gross state. In its subtle state it is without limitation of any kind, it is absolutely attributeless ; while in its gross form it appears as the manifold phenomenon of the created universe. "Thus Brahman having for its body and mode the *Chit* and *Achit* in their subtle condition, is the cause, while the same Brahman having for its body or mode the *chit* and *achit* in a gross form is the effect. Similarly the destruction of the universe is nothing, but the becoming subtle of that which was gross."* Thus Rāmānuja admits the *Pariṇāma* doctrine or the *Satkāryavāda* theory of cause and effect according to which the effect is but a modification of the cause and is already present in a latent form in the cause. He considers the individual souls as much real as the supreme soul though with some limitations, namely that they have no power of control over the universe and are of atomic measure. In nature also they are similar to the supreme soul and in their pure state possess all the qualities of Brahman. The inanimate world is also equally real and has a distinct and separate existence from the other two, though its existence is dependent on Brahman in as much as it is but an attribute of Brahman. Rāmānuja has deduced these types of distinct entities which again are embraced in an all pervading unity in the supreme principle Brahman.

11. Madhva preaches a doctrine which is openly and frankly pluralistic though he finds this pluralism divisible into three types of being essentially different from and independent of each other. These three classes of being are Brahman, Jīva and Jaḍa *i.e.* (1) God (2) the individual soul and (3) the objective world.

(1) God or Brahman possesses an infinite number of attributes of which the following eight are important : creation, protection, dissolution, controlling the universe, giving know-

*Vedānta—V. S. Ghate, p 27.

ledge, manifesting himself and helping individual souls in attaining knowledge of reality and deliverance. He is all bliss and all knowledge in form. Madhva thus brings down Brahman to the position of an ordinary anthropomorphic God in a theistic conception of the universe.

(2) The individual souls are innumerable in number and are distinct from each other as well as from God. They are under the control of the supreme spirit and are subject to many and numerous defects which make them undergo a succession of existences.

(3) The inanimate objective world is made up of Prakṛti which is also independent of the supreme soul and forms the material cause of the world of objects. Brahman is thus only the efficient cause of the inanimate objective world and is not its material cause as well. Brahman is essentially intelligence while the inanimate world of matter is essentially non-intelligence and so it is against reason to think that Brahman can also be its material cause.

12. Thus according to Madhva the universe is made up of the Bhokṛ or the enjoying self, the Bhogya or the objective world of enjoyment and the Niyāmaka or Brahman which is the controlling spirit shaping and guiding the destinies of the other two types of being.

13. Vallabha formulates a doctrine which is essentially pantheistic like that of Śaṅkara but shorn of the doctrine of Māyā of the latter. Thus according to him the Universe made up of animate individual souls and the inanimate objective world is the product of Brahman without the factor of Māyā. That is why his theory is known as "Śuddhādvāitavāda" i.e. pantheism free of the theory of Māyā. The individual soul is non-different from Brahman, of atomic measure and a part of Brahman. It is a manifestation of the Brahman itself with the attribute of bliss obscured in the same sense as sparks are manifestations of fire.

It is atomic in size and yet capable of pervading the whole body just as sandal wood by its smell can make itself known from a great distance. Brahman is both its material and efficient cause. The inanimate world similarly is also a part of Brahman in which the qualities of both intelligence and bliss have been obscured and only the quality of existence alone has been retained. So Brahman is both its material and efficient cause. "Creation and destruction of objects in this world only mean the manifestation and disappearance of the Bhagavat in these forms ; and when Brahman appears as a product and as capable of being experienced, the world is created ; but when it goes back to its causal form and ceases to be the object of ordinary experience, the world is destroyed."* Brahman is eternal, omniscient, omnipresent and possessed of three essential attributes among others *viz.* existence, intelligence and bliss (सत् चित् आनन्दम्) Brahman manifests itself at its own free will only for the sake of sport as the manifold world of individual spirits and inanimate objects. In this process it does not undergo any change in its essence just as a serpent looks different when in coils from what it looks when it is uncoiled.

14. Thus the relation between Brahman, the Jīva and the jaḍa is one of pure identity. It is not however identity in the sense Śaṅkara uses it, but it is identity as it exists between part and the whole (Aṃśa and Aṃśin). Brahman is the all-pervading reality of which inanimate objects and individual souls are parts, and in so far as they are parts of it, they are intrinsically the same as Brahman and equally real. The relation of cause and effect is thus reduced to a relation of identity between the part and the whole in the same sense as the whole body is the cause of a particular limb of the body. Vallabha thus gives a very literal interpretation of the passage "सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म"

15. Like Madhva, Nimbārka also gives a pluralistic view

*V. S. Ghate's Vedānta, p. 36.

of the Vedānta. He admits the existence of three relatively independent principles *viz.* (1) the intelligent beings (*chit*) (2) the non-intelligent world of gross matter (*achit*) and (3) the supreme spirit (*Īśvara*).

(1) The individual soul is of the nature of knowledge (*Jñāna-svarūpa*). It is so in a double sense. It is both the knowledge and the knower of the knowledge and one at the same time. It is compared, therefore, to the sun which is considered to be both light and the source of light as well. The individual soul is also essentially an ego (*Ahamartha*). This egohood persists in all states of the individual souls even when they are in a state of liberation. It is also an active agent (*Kartṛ*) and also essentially an enjoyer in all its conditions (*bhokṛ*). It is however dependent on the grace of the supreme spirit and in that sense it has the quality of being dependent or controlled (*Niyamyatva*).

(2) The non-intelligent world also is subdivided into three different classes. It is firstly the non-material objects such as the effulgence of *Īśvara*, his abode, ornaments etc., and hence they are called non-derived from *Prakṛti* (*aprākṛta*). Secondly it is the material world of gross matter identified with *Prakṛti* and subject more or less to the three qualities of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Lastly *Kāla* or Time also is accepted as an ontological existence which is non-intelligent but ever present as a separate entity.

(3) Above all this, there is the highest self or *Kṛṣṇa* which is identical with the Brahman of the Vedānta. This *Kṛṣṇa* is free from all faults, is the source of all the good attributes. It appears as various incarnations or as a human being as necessity demands. "This Brahman is both the *Upādāna*, the material cause, and the *Nimitta*, the efficient cause, of the universe. It is the material cause in the sense that it enables its natural *Śaktis* (capacities), *viz.* the *chit* and the *achit* in their subtle forms to be manifested in gross forms ; and it is the

efficient cause in the sense that it unites the individual souls with their respective fruits of actions and means of enjoyment. Thus the creation of the universe is nothing but a manifestation in a gross form of what was subtle before and is thus a sort of modification or *Pariṇāma*."* All the same Nimbārka seems to maintain their mutual independence more or less. The relation of the supreme spirit with inanimate and animate objects according to him is one of difference and non-difference at one and the same time. The *chit* and the *achit* must necessarily be different from Brahman as otherwise Brahman would become limited by attributes and cease to be the Absolute. They are non-different from Brahman in the sense that they are absolutely dependent on it and cannot maintain an independent existence by themselves. Non-difference boils down only to mere impossibility of an independent existence (*Paratantra-sattā-bhāvaḥ*).

16. We have thus given a short summary of the views of other important commentators of the *Brahmasūtra*. This will give us material for a comparative study of the excellence of these mutually contradictory views including that of Śaṅkara himself. In making this comparative study we propose to base our views not on the *Brahmasūtra* itself so much as on the texts of the *Upaniṣads* themselves as we have already suggested. We shall make an analysis of the *Vedānta* Philosophy at its very place of origin and then try to estimate how far the view of each commentator approaches the picture of the original as far as we can gather from the direct sources. As a matter of fact the *Brahmasūtra* as it stands cannot by itself be the subject matter of an independent interpretation. The love of the Indian Pundit for condensation of thought is proverbial. The art of using cryptic passages for describing any particular treatise has been developed by the Indian mind to perfection. How much such condensation of language was

*V. S. Ghate's *Vedānta*, p. 30.

valued in those days may well be indicated by the fact that the avoidance of one single letter of the alphabet from a passage used to be regarded as imparting as much pleasure as the birth of a son to a man. It is no wonder, therefore, that the art was overdone and as happens in such cases the means turned out to be the end by itself and all considerations for retaining indications of its contents were cast to the winds. The Sūtras that took shape out of such efforts, therefore, became more or less meaningless jargon of words. The purpose itself was defeated. They became absolutely unintelligible without reference to a laborious commentary. The Brahmasūtra has been no exception to this general rule. The Sūtras by themselves here also do not produce any sense to whatever independent efforts may be applied to them. Had the meaning been more easy of grasp it would have completely precluded the possibility of so many different commentaries taking shape out of it as has happened in the present case. In fact in some cases the same Sūtras are repeated in course of the treatise and presumably they have been used in different senses in each case. The work of the commentator is, therefore, tremendously difficult. He has to depend more on his independent capacities as a thinker than the text of the Sūtra itself for giving shape to a philosophical system out of this meagre material. They barely supply the clues and in fact that also they do very imperfectly. As a result personal inclinations of each individual thinker get the upper hand and are made to reflect on these passages of the text. This is how different theories take shape. It is, therefore, essential under such circumstances to test the views of the commentators in the light of the materials available in the original texts of the Upaniṣads. That will provide us with the best criterion for our present purpose.

17. In the Upaniṣadic texts we come across three main currents of thought. The commentator who takes upon himself the work of shaping out a comprehensive system should be

able to reconcile them into an all-comprehensive unity ; but let us not anticipate our discussions. We shall start with a description of the three main currents.—

(1) First of all we come across passages which seem to preach a broad and concrete type of pantheism. They hold that all that there *is* is clothed in Brahman, is born, brought up and extinguished in Brahman. Brahman pervades through and through the whole of this universe. Let us now quote some passages from the representative Upaniṣads. The Chhāndogya Upaniṣad says. "All that there *is* is Brahman, they are born brought up and extinguished in it" (सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म तज्जलानिति)* In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad there is a passage to this effect : "It is immortal Brahman on all sides, Brahman is in front, Brahman is behind, it is to the south and to the north ; it is below, it is also above ; the whole universe is but the all-pervading great Brahman."† (ब्रह्मैवेदममृतं पुरस्ताद् ब्रह्म पश्चाद् ब्रह्म दक्षिणतश्चोत्तरेण । अधश्चोर्ध्वं च प्रसृतं ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठम्) The Īsopaniṣad starts with this sentence : "Whatever there is changing in this universe is but clothed in Brahman" (ईशा वास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत्)‡ The Tāittirīya Upaniṣad strives to identify the essence in man and the essence in the sun as being the same Brahman (यश्चायं पुरुषे । स यश्चासौ आदित्ये । स एकः)§ The Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad offers obeisance to that God which is in fire, in water, in plants and in trees, in the whole of this universe.¶ यो देवोऽमौ योऽप्सु यो विश्वं भुवनमाविवेश । य ओषधीषु यो वनस्पतिषु तस्मै देवाय नमो नमः) This will be sufficient for our purpose. Had this been the only type of thought available in the Upaniṣads our task of reconstructing the Vedānta would have been an easy one. This would have evidently made out

*Chhandogya III. 14. 1.

†Muṇḍaka II. 2. 12.

‡Isa I.

§Tāittirīya III. 10. 4.

¶Svetasvatara II. 1.

a case for a concrete type of Pantheism. But there are difficulties as we shall show before long.

(2) While the above passages seem to be inclined to identify Brahman with the flitting passing world of phenomena, there are passages again which paint Brahman as an abstract principle which is devoid of all kinds of attributes. It is such passages that have given rise to the conception of the attributeless Brahman (निर्गुणब्रह्मन्). Thus in the Katha Upaniṣad it is described as without sound, without touch, without form, without destruction, without feeling, eternal, and as without smell (अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययं तथारसं नित्यमगन्धवत्त्वं यत्).* It is thus conceived as devoid of all sorts of attributes except of course the necessary and essential attributes of eternity and indestructibility as otherwise it will cease to be real. The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad which gives us the four stages of individual consciousness gives a still more elaborate description of this aspect of the Brahman. It says,† “It is neither internally conscious nor externally conscious nor conscious in both ways nor crystallised consciousness, nor consciousness nor unconsciousness ; it is unseen, unused, without attributes, unthinkable, inconceivable, concentrated into a unity, devoid of the fleeting show of phenomena, calm, auspicious and undivided.” (नान्तःप्रज्ञं न वहिःप्रज्ञं नोभयतः-प्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ॥ अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यं मग्राह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यप-देश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवम् अद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥) Thus all possible relative terms are negated in respect of Brahman and only such attributes are affirmed as are essential to the conception of an abstract absolute entity such as unity and indivisibility. This conception of Brahman is in direct contradiction with the conception as derived from the passages quoted in the immediately previous paragraph. There the Absolute is accepted as concretely present in the world of flitting, changing phenomena ; but here it is pointed as something different from the limited relative world of phenomena.

*Katha I. 3. 15.

†Māṇḍūkya 7.

The world of phenomena cannot again be conceived as apart from Brahman as it is an accepted principle that Brahman is both the efficient and material cause of the phenomenal world as the texts of the Upaniṣads seem to imply. The commentator is thus faced with a very difficult problem to solve.

(3) Apart from these there is a third class of passages which seem to suggest a clue to the solution of the above problem of removing the contradiction between an abstract conception of Brahman devoid of all attributes and a concrete conception which identifies it with the universe itself. In the seventh chapter of the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad we find Nārada approaching Sanatkumāra in his search for Brahman. In his ultimate analysis of the character of Brahman, Sanatkumāra paints it as the infinity of bliss (भूमानन्द). The character of Brahman in its essential form is available according to him in a state where the duality of the world of phenomena has been dissolved into an all pervading unity. Let us quote his own words : "Where it sees no thing, hears no sound, knows no object, that is infinity (भूमा) ; where it sees another, it knows another, it is limited. What is unlimited is deathless, what is limited is subject to decay," (यत्र नान्यत् पश्यति नान्यच्छृणोति नान्यद्विजानाति स भूमाऽथ यत्रान्यत् पश्यति अन्यद् विजानाति तदल्पं यो वै भूमा तदमृतमथ यदल्पं तन्मत्तमम्).* In his discourses in the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Yājñavalkya still further brings out the implications of such a theory. He seems to effect a reconciliation between the concept of the attributeless Brahman and the concept of a concrete Brahman visible and tangible in the world of phenomena by affirming the truth of the latter in a stage of duality of the subject and the object and affirming the truth of the former in a pure conception of Brahman as it is. He thus gives us practically the kernel of the later Māyā doctrine as developed in the hands of the great Śaṅkara. But more of it hereafter. According to him there is the relative world of subject and object, perceiver and the perceived, enjoyer and the

*Chhāndogya VII. 24. 1.

enjoyed only where there is *the appearance of duality*, but where everything dissolves into the all pervading Brahman there is no more scope for knowledge or enjoyment or perception. To quote his own words : "Only where there is an appearance of duality, one smells another, one sees another, one hears another, one talks to another, one conceives another, one perceives another; but where it is all dissolved into *Ātman* then who will smell whom, who will see whom, who will hear whom, who will talk to whom etc." यत्र हि द्वैतमिव भवति तदितर इतरं जिघ्रति तदितर इतरं पश्यति तदितर इतरं शृणोति तदितर इतरमभिवदति तदितर इतरं मनुते तदितर इतरं जानाति यत्र वा अस्य सर्वमात्मैवाभूत् तत् केन कं जिघ्रेत् केन कं पश्येत् केन कं शृणुयात् केन कमभिवदेत् तत् केन कं मन्वीत्).* In the fourth chapter Yājñavalkya gives a more elaborate description of this aspect of Brahman where the possibility of all perception, i.e. the duality of subject and object, vanishes as Brahman remains there as the quintessence of all knowledge and yet without an object of knowledge. It is in a state of nonduality and so there cannot be any possibility of perception which is based on subject-object relation and he believes that Brahman still retains its power of knowledge which shines forth even as the sun sends out its rays through empty space no matter whether there is any world to reflect it or not. (यद्वै तन्न पश्यति पश्यन् वै तन्न पश्यति न हि द्रष्टुर्दृष्टे विपरिलोपो विद्यतेऽविनाशित्वात् न तु तद्द्वितीयमस्ति ततोऽन्यद्विभक्तं यत् पश्येत्).† We should here specially note the use of the word 'द्वैतमिव' in both the passages quoted above. It has a special significance and it has been deliberately used with a set purpose. It talks of "an appearance of duality" and not mere "duality" which implies that this duality is not a true phase of Brahman but a mere appearance. So duality according to this conception is a mere appearance and not an essential feature of reality. As to how this appearance is brought about the question has not been tackled by the Upaniṣads and it is Śaṅkara who for the first time sought to supply the missing link with his theory

*Bṛhadāraṇyaka II. 4. 14.

†Bṛhadāraṇyaka IV. 3. 23.

of Māyā. The main object of this discussion is thus to show that the kernel of the Māyā theory is already there in the texts of the Upaniṣads. The foundation is there and only the edifice was to be constructed. In any case, this is the way the Upaniṣads themselves point to as the solution of the problem of the contradictory character of Brahman, as an attributeless Absolute and its character as the efficient and the material cause of the world of phenomena, as manifest to our senses.

18. We shall now compare the views of the various commentators to the reconstruction given above of the main currents of Upaniṣadic thought following the same order in our treatment as we followed in presenting the different views. We therefore, take up Rāmānuja first. The essence of the view of Rāmānuja lies in the fact that he does not treat the inanimate objects and individual souls as mere appearance, but as essential parts of Brahman. They are like the body of Brahman according to him. It is true that in a subtle state Brahman is attributeless, but nevertheless he admits the gross state of Brahman as revealed in the phenomenal world of duality, as a reality and not as a mere appearance. The reader is now in a position to consider whether this interpretation is confirmed by the Upaniṣadic passages above. It has been already noted in that connection that the trend of ideas is in favour of a theory, which refuses to accept the world of duality as a real aspect of Brahman and is rather in favour of a theory, which discards it as mere appearance. If so, then Rāmānuja's demand for recognizing the world of duality as a reality has no basis for it in the Upaniṣadic texts.

19. Madhva's interpretation of the Brahmasūtra stands apart as a class by itself. It is openly pluralistic and does not even admit that Brahman is the material cause of the universe, a point which is conceded by all the other commentators. The essential features of his doctrine are that it goes in for absolute plurality by admitting the individual souls and

the material world as separate principles from Brahman which can exercise influence over them only externally. It will not be a difficult task for us to demonstrate that this view is flagrantly in opposition to the spirit of the Vedānta Philosophy. One indication of this is the fact that his admission of the authority of the texts of the Upaniṣads is only theoretical, while in practice he quotes passages mainly from the Dharma Saṃhitās in support of his special view. His preaching of plurality is openly against the spirit of such numerous passages as go to establish the unity and oneness of the universe and the character of Brahman as both the efficient and material cause of the universe. The passages already quoted before will provide sufficient material to support this observation. His explanation is very often farfetched, fantastic and smells of sectarianism. His explanation of the famous text 'तत्त्वमसि' found in the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad will be sufficient to establish this charge against him. Thus he explains तत्त्वमसि as meaning त्वं तदीयः असि वा त्वं तस्य असि (Thou art his). Similarly the passage अयमात्मा ब्रह्म according to him means that the individual soul grows or advances (बद्धं नशीलः)

20. Vallabha's doctrine makes a nearer approach to Rāmānuja than to Śaṅkara. His central conception is that the world of phenomena consisting of individual souls and material bodies is an intrinsic part of Brahman. Brahman is the greater body of which these are parts. His favourite example is that of a snake in coil as compared with Brahman in its causal form, as contrasted with the same snake uncoiled as compared with the Brahman as manifested in the world of phenomena. From this it is clear by implication that he is prepared to concede the reality of the phenomenal world in the same sense as the reality of Brahman. It is not, therefore, a mere appearance but an intrinsic part of Brahman which is made visible in its uncoiled form. If so, like Rāmānuja, he makes out a case for the acceptance of a pluralistic view of reality as qualified by an all-pervading unity which is Brahman. It may

have special philosophic excellence but it is doubtful whether it has the sanction of the Upaniṣads. We should once again recall the passages which seem to solve the problem of one abstract attributeless Brahman forming at the same time the material and efficient cause of the world of phenomena by suggesting that they are mere appearance and are not the true feature of Brahman-in-itself. Apparently Vallabha's interpretation is in direct opposition to such a line of thought.

21. Only Nimbārka is now left for our consideration. Nimbārka starts very much in the same lines as Vallabha by treating Brahman as both the material and the efficient cause of the universe, but his ultimate conclusions are more akin to the conception of Madhva than to that of Vallabha. Thus he maintains that individual souls are separate from Brahman to such a degree that they maintain their individuality even in a state of liberation. The inanimate world is also similarly separate from Brahman. The non-difference attributed to them in the Sūtra must be taken to mean mere dependence on Brahman according to him. To such a theory, therefore, we have the same objections as to the frankly pluralistic conception of Madhva. As we have already shown, Nimbārka's allegiance to a monistic doctrine is only nominal while in reality he is an out and out pluralist. In this sense it may be contrasted with the theories of Vallabha and Rāmānuja which are thoroughly monistic in spirit and preach a type of concrete Pantheism. Nimbārka's theory on the other hand is essentially pluralistic while cosmogonically he traces the plurality from one source. As such it is against the spirit of the Vedānta Philosophy which, as has been already stated, is essentially monistic.

22. We are now in a position to take up Śaṅkara for the purpose of finding out how favourably his doctrine compares with the main currents of Upaniṣadic thoughts as traced by us in an earlier part of this chapter. There often lies a general charge against Śaṅkara that the insertion of the doctrine of

Māyā into the Vedānta system by Śaṅkara is a farfetched one and it does not receive the support of the Brahmasūtra texts. The feeling against the Māyā doctrine is so keen that we get the following passages in the Padmapurāṇa which openly attack it as a hidden type of Buddhistic Philosophy and as against the spirit of the Vedānta :

मायावादमसंख्यं प्रच्छन्नं बौद्धमेव च ।

मयैव कथितं, देवि, कलौ ब्राह्मणरूपिणा ॥

And again :

वेदार्थवन्महाशास्त्रं मायावादमवैदिकम् ।

मयैव कथितं, देवि, जगतां नाशकारणात् ॥

It is often argued that the Brahmasūtra keeps no scope for the development of a doctrine like the Māyā doctrine. Thus it is stated in support of this contention that the Sūtrakāra expressly uses the term Māyā only once in Brahmasūtra III 2, 3., and there also it is used in connection with the creations in the dream state of man. As such, the logical connection is pointedly with the explanation of the dream states and not with the general cosmological or cosmogonical problems of Philosophy in general. Śaṅkara was not, therefore, justified in applying it generally to the cosmological problem. While there may be some truth in this allegation, it is not absolutely correct to say that the Brahmasūtra leaves no scope at all for the shaping of the Māyā doctrine, as done by Śaṅkara. Thus we may refer to Brahmasūtra II. 1. 14. where there is a reference to the passage in the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad “वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेय मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम्”^{*} Śaṅkara translates it as “the modification is a name merely, which has its origin in speech while the truth is that it is clay merely.” The idea is that in such cases clay is the essence while the form in which it appears creates the justification for using different names for different forms and, as such, the form is of use only as a name and not as an essential attribute of clay. By analogy he characterizes Brahman as of the nature

^{*}Chhāndogya VI. 1. 1.

of undifferentiated intelligence while the phenomenal world of many is a mere appearance, a superimposition made by faulty understanding. Rāmānuja translates the same passage in the following manner : On account of speech (*i. e.* for the sake of the accomplishment of some practical activities such as bringing water etc which are preceded by speech) the clay takes an effect and a name ; they all (clay things) are clay ; this only is true." It is needless to say that the translation of Rāmānuja is obviously farfetched ; otherwise the long explanatory bracket would not have been necessary at all. Moreover it is not correct to say that all works for which clay things are used are initiated by speech, these may be initiated by spontaneous voluntary acts. So the translation given by Śaṅkara is apparently much more satisfactory and, as such, this gives a clue to the formation of the Māyā doctrine.

23. Again we may refer to Brahmasūtra II. 3. 50., where the word 'ābhāsa' occurs. This is a part of the seventeenth Adhikaraṇa, the subject matter of which is the relation between the individual soul and the supreme soul or Brahman. It includes Sūtras 43 to 53. The first Sūtra seems to indicate that the individual soul is a part of the Absolute, and then necessarily arises the question whether in such circumstances the supreme soul is also subject to feelings of pleasure and pain as the individual soul. The relevant Sūtra is 46 which says that "the other (the supreme soul) is not similarly subject to feelings of pleasure and pain (as the individual soul) as ordinarily appears." In that same connection comes the important Sūtra 50 which ends as follows : आभास एव च. It literally means "it is just an appearance." If the meaning is to be sought from the context and from the trend of thought that runs through the whole of this Adhikaraṇa, then the meaning is very clear. It can no doubt refer to the feelings of pleasure and pain of individual souls as a mere appearance, but that has no relevancy to the present point in issue. It can only mean that the relation of part and whole said to subsist between the supreme

soul and the individual soul is a mere appearance. If it is meant to yield any meaning at all it cannot but mean this. And Śaṅkara, whose chief aim is to establish this theory of appearance (Māyāvāda) as the true interpretation of the Upaniṣadic doctrine against the Brahmapariṇāmavāda of some Vedānta commentators (e. g. Bhartṛprapañcha), has accepted this interpretation.* Rāmānuja and Nimbārka, however, have tried to explain away this word as meaning "hetvābhāsa" a fallacious argument as referring to the argument of Śaṅkara, which tries to explain away duality as a mere appearance. It is needless to say that there is no scope for such an interpretation at all, in as much as there is no reference at all to the doctrine of Māyā in this particular Adhikaraṇa. If that was the purpose of the Sūtrakāra, he could have as well added the word "हेतु" before it which would not have very much lengthened the Sūtra.

24. As regards the actual doctrine of identity as formulated by Śaṅkara, we are now in a better position to appreciate its merits as an interpretation of Upaniṣadic thought. We have shown just immediately above that his theory of *Vivarta* and his explanation of the world of duality as a mere appearance, which is the product of Māyā or Avidyā is not wholly against the spirit of the Brahmasūtra. Its special merit, however, lies in the fact that such an interpretation of the individual souls and inanimate objects is completely in keeping with the main currents of the Upaniṣadic thought. The theory was already there in its germ in the texts of the Upaniṣads. What Śaṅkara did was only to develop it into a completed system by bringing out the implications contained in them. What was left implicit was made explicit by him, what was left undeveloped was developed by him, what was an uncompleted structure was completed through his efforts into an edifice with the addition of a superstructure.

*Vide M. Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* p. 339.

Section III—Parallel Systems in Western Philosophy compared.

Pantheism of Spinoza—Objective Idealism of Schelling

—Absolute Idealism of Hegel.

25. We shall now compare Śaṅkara's doctrine of identity with parallel systems of thought found in Western Philosophy. This is necessary for the purpose of a clearer grasp of Śaṅkara's view by comparing and contrasting it with analogical views. This will also indirectly bring out the excellence of Śaṅkara's view as well.

26. We shall start with the first great modern Philosopher Spinoza. According to him the logical presupposition of all existences is the *causa sui* or the unconditioned *i. e.* what does not need for its conception the antecedent conception of anything else. The substance is the only thing which answers to such a conception. It alone exists and it combines in itself all that exists. This substance again is a unity, not merely a numerical unity but is an absolute oneness. This substance has an infinite number of modes or qualities. It is the modes that are responsible for the world of plurality consisting of individual objects and spirits. Spinoza does not, however, admit the existence of individual objects in the sense that they exist and persist independently. "We only come to things by giving independence to the modes which are essentially dependent, by disregarding what constitutes their nature—the fact that they are merely in something else." In this abstract way of looking at them, we alter them just as, in one of the similes employed, frost would change the waves into lumps of ice, or in the other, a needle cutting the line would change it into points. Spinoza gives the name of imagination, to this partial and fragmentary way of looking at things ; and we must accordingly say that imagination alone makes (independent) things out of (dependent) modes.* Things as such are thus the result of a limited apprehension

*Erdmann—History of Philosophy (Modern) vol. II. p. 62.

but as soon as their true nature is realised, they cease to exist independently and are no longer individual things in the ordinary sense of the word. Things in this sense are according to him endowed with two aspects. On account of limited apprehension, to the ordinary man they appear as separate and many but as soon as their true nature is realised, they cease to exist independently and become a unity in the Universal Substance or God. This "viewing things in their essence" as apart from their appearance which reveals them as a multiple of separate units is according to him the same thing as "viewing under the form of eternity" (*Sub specie eternitatis*).

27. It is evident that there is a general similarity of thought between the two systems. Reality according to both Śāṅkara and Spinoza is essentially an absolute unity. The world of plurality as perceived by the senses according to both again is an appearance and is the result of limited perception and with the dawning of adequate knowledge it passes off. But their similarities stop here. Spinoza conceives the substances as possessed of innumerable attributes of which the human mind can perceive two only namely thought and extension. Śāṅkara however conceives the Brahman as wholly attributeless and essentially intelligence (विज्ञानघन). Apart from that, Spinoza does not give us a satisfactory explanation as to how the world of plurality is an appearance, how it is brought about at all. He is not quite happy with this explanation at all and seems to labour under a difficulty. In fact his argument seems to move in a vicious circle. On the one hand he explains that the world of plurality is a product of imagination or limited vision which again is due to many minds and many ideas. Thus he explains imagination by what he assumes to be the product of imagination. Śāṅkara's explanation of the factors of this appearance of plurality is in contrast very thoroughgoing and very consistent throughout.

28. We shall next take up Schelling. Schelling starts with the inconsistency of the theory which tries to explain away the object in terms of the subject. There can be no object without a subject as held by Berkeley and afterwards reaffirmed by Fichte. Nor can there be a subject without an object. So the subject cannot produce the object nor can the object produce the subject. Subject and object being thus limited by each other cannot be the Absolute. The Absolute must be beyond the ego and the non-ego, beyond all conditions of existence. The ego and the non-ego are both derived from a third higher principle. This third principle is reason or universal Will. The dynamic aspect of all being around us also made a deep impression in his mind and so he conceived reality as a process of continuous growth or evolution. He also found that reason need not necessarily identify itself with^m conscious reason alone. Reason includes the unconscious instinctive purposive forces of nature also. He, therefore, conceived reality as a dynamic process in which the universal Will works out its own purpose, which is the production of self-consciousness. Nature is but an earlier stage of growth in the life history of the Absolute spirit, in which it works as an unconscious spirit. In animal life, it reaches the stage of consciousness, and in man, it reaches the highest stage of growth, by producing self-consciousness. Nature and mind are, therefore, fundamentally of the same nature; they are but different stages in the life process of the Absolute. The dead and unconscious objects in nature are but unsuccessful attempts of the Absolute to reflect upon itself. Since nature and mind are but linked together like this, they have but one and the same law to guide them. The laws of mind are also the laws of reality. If we, therefore, trace the different stages in the history of self-consciousness, we shall at the same time, be tracing the development of the Absolute principle, as it manifests itself in nature. "All qualities are sensations, all bodies are percepts of nature, nature itself with all its sensations and percepts is a congealed intelligence."

29. From the above statement it is very clear that between Śaṅkara and Schelling there is very little common ground. The only points of contact are that both assume that the ultimate principle which is the origin and source of the whole universe is of the nature of intelligence or reason and secondly they both agree in holding that the whole world of plurality as manifest in nature and thinking individuals is the same as the Absolute spirit. Apart from these general points, the two theories differ in essential details. According to Śaṅkara, the world of phenomena is an imposition on the true nature of Brahman due to the operation of Avidyā but according to Schelling it is a rational process of evolution indulged in by the Absolute spirit itself for the purpose of its own comprehension. The objective world of plurality is not only caused by the Absolute but is an essential form undergone by it for its own completer development. The doctrine of appearance as opposed to reality—of Māyā as operating in the production of a fictitious plurality is wholly absent in Schelling's philosophy. Śaṅkara is in favour of a thorough-going monism which is rather abstract in its nature but Schelling advocates a type of monism which seeks to reconcile pluralism with abstract monism by trying to admit the reality of both. Śaṅkara denies ultimate reality to the pluralistic aspect of the universe but Schelling does not. While the one is monistic the other is monistic-pluralistic.

30. We shall now take up Hegel. Hegel built on the foundation laid by Schelling. He agrees with Schelling in identifying logic with ontology. The universe itself is to him a logical system. Whatever is real in this world is rational and whatever is rational is real. The universe is, to him, logic crystallized, so to speak. Subject and object, matter and mind, both are identically the same thing, both are reason at bottom. The Absolute is nothing but reason, which lies and evolves both in nature and in mind.

31. In the beginning was the Idea or God, which is the potential universe, the timeless totality of all the possibilities of evolution. It develops by itself according to its own laws of development which are logical laws. It is thus that we get the whole of this objective world which is the concrete development of the creative Logos. God, as Idea or Pure Thought, never existed before the creation of the world. It is His nature to develop eternally, according to forms or categories which are eternal. The idea brings out all that lies within itself by a logical process of development and this unfolding takes the form of nature. Here the idea remains unconscious. The Idea also feels the need of studying itself and therefore, it strives to be conscious. In animals it appears in the conscious stage, and feels and knows itself in the form of the objective world. Its ultimate goal is, however, to be self-conscious which it realizes in the human mind. Here the Idea studies itself and brings out the laws of its own development to consciousness. It is in this way that the universal mind realises its destiny by thinking itself in its objects. It thus becomes for itself what it was in itself in the form of the idea or the potential universe. Ultimately, therefore, there is but one and the same reality which is Thought. This Thought first of all develops itself logically and that is how we get the objective world. Having realized itself in an actualized form, it studies itself and thus assumes the form of the subject or the mind. The universe is thus an eternal process of self-introspection of the Absolute. Thought and Being, subject and object, are thus at bottom *one*.

32. Hegel's philosophy is thus a further logical development of the system of Schelling. As such its points of contact with the philosophy of Śaṅkara are only with regard to some prominent land marks in the systems of both and as regards details there is infinite divergence between them. The first point of agreement between them as in case of Schelling is that both admit that reality in its ultimate analysis, in its essence is but

a unit, a single principle. The second point of contact is that both maintain that this ultimate principle is of the nature of reason or intelligence. But the analogy does not and cannot work out further. The conception of the Idea as in itself existing as a logical precondition of the Idea actualised in nature has no parallel in the system of Śaṅkara. This concept of Hegel is more or less akin to the conception of the world of Reals or universal Ideas as developed in Plato's philosophy. Moreover Hegel does not look upon the world of nature as a mere appearance but as logical development of the abstract Idea as a concrete crystallization of the Absolute. This is fundamentally against the spirit of Śaṅkara's philosophy which paints Brahman as eternally existing as an abstract unity. It is true that Hegel traces a unity pervading through the system of nature which is self-conscious and in the mind of the Philosopher apprehends its own unity. But Śaṅkara is not in favour of such a theory of complex unity. He is in favour of a simple uncomplex unity where duality cannot exist except as an appearance brought about by a distorted vision.

Section IV—Parallel views in Greek Philosophy.

33. We shall now take up Parmenides. According to Parmenides, Being alone has truth and Non-Being none ; Being is one and excludes all plurality and multiplicity whether in the temporal order or the spatial order. Similarly Becoming is also outside of Being because it contains an element of Non-Being and, therefore, Becoming is also equally false. Being is free from all determinations. We cannot even quite call it unlimited, as in that case it will come under something conceptual, nor is it limited by anything lying outside it. Being is of the nature of reason, and thought has Being for its attribute. That which thinks and that which is thought are identical here and so there is not even a thinking Reason opposed to the unitary Being. As such Parmenides is not prepared to admit reality to the plurality of the phenomenal world which necessarily

puts his concept of Being within limitations. "The evidence of the senses alone compels its recognition. But since the senses do not perceive Being and are deceptive, multiplicity also is a mere appearance and physics is the doctrine of opinions. Why man is subjected to these opinions is a point, Parmenides cannot understand, but only deplore."* Yet Parmenides is not quite prepared to deny all semblance of reality to the world of plurality. He says that the world of multiplicity is the work of some mysterious process, the product of two principles which he sometimes calls Flame and Night, sometimes Warmth and Cold, and sometimes Fire and Earth. These are very vague notions and should be taken as meaning something like the opposition between Being and Non-Being. Man's earthly structure somehow subjects him to opinion and so makes him perceive Non-Being or the world of multiplicity.

34. The system of Parmenides thus seems to bear a striking resemblance with the Vedānta system of Śaṅkara. It looks very much like an undeveloped version of Śaṅkara's philosophy. They both agree completely in regarding reality in its essence as intrinsically one undivided unit which is of the nature of Reason or Thought. They are also equally emphatic in denying reality to the world of phenomena which makes us perceive plurality and call it appearance. As to how this appearance is brought about, Parmenides is not quite definite. He tries to solve it but evidently fails and does not arrive at any definite conclusion. It is here where the system of Śaṅkara goes ahead of Parmenides. Śaṅkara gives us a consistent account of the factors which make man perceive this appearance of plurality and also gives a detailed exposition of the real nature of this appearance.

35. The system which however makes the nearest approach to the doctrine of Śaṅkara is the system evolved by the great Greek Philosopher Plato. Plato has a natural pre-

*Erdmann—History of Philosophy Vol. I. p. 41.

judice against sense-perception, based on the belief that it gives us fleeting changing appearance only. He, therefore, comes to the conclusion that genuine knowledge consists of relationships between concepts or universal ideas. These universal ideas, according to him, are not derived from particular objects given by sensation, but they lie dormant within the mind. Since knowledge is correspondence of thought with reality, there must be some reality with which it is to correspond. This cannot be the objective phenomenal world as concepts have no resemblance with them. Plato, therefore, posits a third world, constituted by universals as the world of Reality. This world of universal ideas is something permanent, unchangeable and eternal. This world of ideas is not a rule of chaos, but is a well-ordered system, where ideas are inter-related and connected in well-ordered unity. They are all arranged in the logical order and are subsumed under the highest idea of all, which is the idea of the good. In order to account for the changing phenomenal world, Plato brings in a third principle, which was later designated as matter. It is the raw material upon which the real ideas are somehow impressed and that accounts for whatever semblance of reality the fleeting phenomenal world may possess. "Nature owes its existence to the influence of the ideal world on non-being or matter. As a ray of light passed through a prism is broken into many rays, so the idea is broken into many objects by matter." As to what is the exact nature of matter Plato has not tried to explain it very clearly. "It is called the *συνάστημα* of the world, but must not be understood as a definite substance as is understood by the negative predicates, of the void of quality and form and visibility, which are ascribed to it. What then was it? According to Aristotle's assertion which agrees with Plato's own explanation in the *Timæus*, it was space. Or perhaps it may be still more accurately described as the form of outwardness."* This will show in

*Erdmann's History of Philosophy Vol. I. p. 114.

what an indefinite state Plato left the question of the nature of this matter. Whether it is a principle separate from the Idea or not does not appear to have been definitely decided. As a result, the system of Plato inevitably draws itself towards a dualistic conception of reality.

36. Broadly speaking there is thus a striking similarity between the systems of Plato and Śaṅkara. The similarity cannot however be pressed to details. Thus there is a remarkable keenness in both the philosophers in associating truth with a substance which is eternal and free from the imposition of all changes. There is also a remarkable agreement in their maintaining that ultimate reality is of the nature of reason or intelligence. There is a still more remarkable parallelism in the way the two philosophers try to explain the phenomenal world of changing fleeting plurality. But the analogy cannot be pressed further than this. There is one great point of difference as well between the two philosophers which we should do well to note here. Śaṅkara is in favour of a type of Monism which is under no conditions prepared to accept any limitations. He advocates an out and out unqualified abstract Monism. Plato does not however do so. It is true that he traces all reality to one single idea *e.g.* the Idea of the Good which is identical with God. But this is a complex idea and contains within itself a hierarchy of ideas which are as numerous as universal ideas necessary to think out mentally the world of phenomena. It is thus a complex unity that Plato preaches, a unity that is qualified by multiplicity or we might say a plurality connected together by a supervening unity. As regards the theory of Plato regarding the explanation of the world of plurality he does not seem to be very certain of his own grounds. Apparently his solution is unsuccessful and amounts merely to groping for a satisfactory explanation which he himself actually failed to grasp. It is here that Śaṅkara excels him undoubtedly. Śaṅkara develops his theory in a convincing and satisfactory

manner and as such his theory is certainly a great advancement on the theory as developed by Plato.

Section V—"The Great Sayings" of Identity.

37. Śaṅkara, as we have shown above, has based his doctrine on the Upaniṣads, and has quoted some "Great Sayings" (mahāvākyam) which, if they mean anything, mean that the individual and the universe are the manifestations of the same reality and are in fact identical. There is no break between nature and man or between nature and nature's God. It is not known definitely how many of the quotations are to be included within the Great Sayings. The author of the Pañchadaśī has taken one from an Upaniṣad of each Veda in the fifth chapter of his book—*e. g.* प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म (Āīt. Up. III. 5. 3. of R̥gveda), अहं ब्रह्मास्मि (Br. Ā. Up. I. 4. 10. of Yajurveda), तत्त्वमसि (Chh. Up. VI. 8. 7 etc. of Sāmaveda) and अयमात्मा ब्रह्म (Māṇḍ. Up. II. of the Ātharvaṇas) and has shown how the conception of Brahman (the unity of the universe) and the conception of Ātman (self of the individual) merge into a synthesis which carries none of the defects of either, giving the idea of infinity and certitude in the single conception. To these possibly might be added a fifth from the Tāīt. Up. II. 1. 1. of the Black Yajurveda सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म which gives a description of the higher reality, pointing to its certain, spiritual and infinite character. The identity in these sentences is said to be established by Bhāga Lakṣaṇā where a part of the sense of a word in a sentence is abandoned and a part retained to make a consistent combined sense, as in the example, सोऽयं देवदत्तः, Devadatta of a past time is identified with Devadatta of the present time by abandoning the time factor of both and referring to the man only. The Vedāntasāra deals with two* *viz.* तत्त्वमसि and अहं ब्रह्मास्मि of these great sayings, which might, therefore, be taken to be the most important of them. Śaṅkara himself

* *Vide* Vedantasāra, p. 39 etc. (Col. Jacob) and p. 61-70 and 71-75 (J. Vidyasagara).

also has attached very great importance to these two as specially suitable for the unfolding of his Vivartavāda, which maintains that Brahman does not change into, but merely appears as the world.

38. Col. Jacob finds only eleven of these "great sayings" from a MS., Copy of the Mahāvākyavivarāṇa which speaks of twelve such sayings and professes to give them all.* Of these, one is a misquotation, viz. स एवमेव पुरुषो ब्रह्म which probably stands for स एतमेव पुरुषं ब्रह्म ततममपश्यत् quoted by Śaṅkara in his Brahmasūtra Bhāṣya from the Āitareya Up. I. 3. 13; and another एष त आत्मान्तर्याम्यमृतः (Br. Ā. Up. III. 7. 3-23.) has been definitely stated by Śaṅkara to refer to Īśvara and not to the absolute, though it has been accepted by Rāmānuja and other theistic Vedāntists as a Mahāvākya. The other passages quoted do not speak so much of Identity, as of the absolute unity of the ultimate principle e.g. स यश्चायं पुरुषे यश्चासावादित्ये स एकः (Tāit. Up. II. 8. 5., III. 10. 4.), सर्व्वं खलिद् ब्रह्म (Chh. Up. III. 14. 1.), एकमेवाद्वितीयम् (Chh. Up. VI. 2. 1.), to which might be added two others इदं सर्व्वं यदयमात्मा (Br. Ā. Up. I. 4. 10.), आत्मैवेदं सर्व्वम् (Chh. Up. VII. 25. 2.), all of which have been referred to by Śaṅkara in several places of his commentary. Lastly विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म (Br. Ā. Up. III. 9. 27/7.) is probably a Vājasaneyin counterpart of सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म† and attempts a description of ब्रह्मन्, where आनन्दम् according to Śaṅkara is to be taken as all-perfectness, all-sereneness. The Saṃkṣepaśārīraka which also recognises one Mahāvākya from each Veda attaches great importance to them, as according to it, no knowledge of the non-dual Puruṣa is possible without them :

विना महावाक्यमतो न कश्चित्
पुमांसमद्वैतमवैति जन्तुः । III. 303

* Vide his notes on Vedantasara (p. 39), p. 132.

† The terms however should not be taken to ascribe any attributes to Brahman but to establish the absolute oneness and perfection of the ultimate Reality, as is said by Kalpatarukara on Br. Sū. I. 1. 2.

अविशिष्टमपथ्यायानकशब्दप्रकाशितम् ।
एकं वेदान्तिन्याता अखण्डं प्रतिपेदिरे ॥

According to Śaṅkara, direct knowlege is possible through verbal evidence. The stock example is that of ten dullwitted persons who have swum across a river and, to make sure that none of them are drowned, are counting the number, each excluding himself. As in this case, a direct knowledge of the tenth amongst them is aroused, when a passerby accosts the reckoner, saying दशमस्त्वमसि, "You are the tenth", at the end of his counting up to number nine, so from the Mahāvākyas, direct knowledge of the ultimate reality is attained as soon as the ignorance, veiling it, disappears. It is to be remembered in this connection that as the ultimate reality, like the tenth man of the example, is always existing, attainment can only mean the removal of the Nescience. Mokṣa, therefore, according to Śaṅkara, is the very nature of the self—its innate character, veiled it may be for the time being. There is no 'becoming' for the self in an ordinary sense. The Upaniṣad, therefore, teaches 'That thou art' and not 'that thou becomest.'

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A STUDY OF SĀṆKARA

CHAPTER IV

The Brahman

Section I—The Pure Esoteric Brahman

1. Scattered about in the passages of the various important Upaniṣads we get references to the description of the Brahman. These descriptions broadly speaking distinguish between two separate and distinct types of manifestation of the Brahman who is "the Absolute" and beyond these manifestations. There is one form in which it is a passing ephemeral fleeting show, the reference being directly to the phenomenal aspect of the Universe, and there is the other form which is permanent, static and unmanifested* but related to the phenomenal world—both of which are appearances. There is a further suggestion that the first form in which we get the multiplicity of the phenomenal world explicitly and the second form in which it remains implicitly are after all mere appearances. They exist but they are not real in an absolute sense, they make their appearance only through a false sense of duality. This idea is brought out beautifully in the following passages.

2. In the Second Chapter† of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad we get the famous story of the initiation of Māitreyī into the knowledge of Brahman by her husband Yājñavalkya. The story has assumed an unusual importance on account of

*इ वाव ब्रह्मणी रूपे मूर्त्तं चैवामूर्त्तं च मर्ता चासत् च स्थितं च यच्च सच्च तद्वत् । Br. A. Up. II. 3. 1. Sāṅkara holds the Absolute to be beyond these two forms—the manifest and the unmanifest, the mortal and the immortal, the static and the dynamic, the being and the non-being. These according to him are determinations holding good in the phenomenal world, and hence these are all negated by the 'Neti Neti' that follows. This we shall discuss later.

†Br. Ar. Up. II. 4.

the value of the matter it teaches, and that is probably the reason why it has been retold again in the fourth chapter of the same Upaniṣad. The story begins in a very dramatic setting, in which Yājñavalkya breaks news to his wife Māltreyī that he proposes to renounce the world and therefore, asks her to get the property, he leaves behind, partitioned between herself and her co-wife, Kātyāyanī. Māltreyī, however, refuses to succeed to these earthly possessions, as they cannot give her immortality and requests her husband to teach her the knowledge that her husband has gathered. This attitude of the wife naturally impresses the husband very deeply and he joyfully accepts the task of transmitting to her the substance of the philosophy he has evolved. He traces an underlying link between all the seemingly different parts of the world of phenomenon and ascribes it to the all-pervading Brahman. The development of altruistic love in the human heart, he refers to as an indication of the great truth that in all individuals there is the Brahman underneath, and that, in loving the near or dear one, we only love ourselves. It is from this underlying unity of Brahman that this phenomenal world of multiplicity arises, like sparks taking rise from a central fire.* This aspect of multiplicity, however, is only a passing phase. It is sustained only so long as there is a sense of duality of the subject and the object, of the perceiver and the percept. As soon as this sense of duality passes off this aspect of multiplicity also is extinguished and is substituted by an all-pervading oneness, which is essentially of the nature of intelligence (Vijñānaghana). This happens because, in this stage, the object becomes unified with the subject, and all that there remains, is the perceiving subject without the object to be perceived. Necessarily, therefore, there can be no perception and no duality.

3. This theory of his is further clarified in a later

*Br. A. Up. II. 1. 20.

passage appearing in the fourth chapter of the same Upaniṣad.* In a lecture he gave in the court of King Janaka he describes the characteristics of the Ātman in its various stages. After describing the waking and the dream stage, where the sense of duality subsists, he describes the third form, where Brahman tires of the restless activity of the stage of duality and assumes the state of non-duality. In this state, all the states of consciousness, that subsist on the subject-object relation, vanish. Yet the Brahman in this state retains its character as reason, as intelligence, as subject. The reason, why it fails to perceive the objective world of hearing touch and sight, is not that the Brahman ceases to exercise intelligence, but because there is no object detached from the subject to make the psychological phenomenon of perception possible. "It does not perceive, because it does not perceive inspite of exercising the faculty of perception ; the power of the perceiver to perceive cannot be extinguished, because it is indestructible, there is no second to it as separated from it for it to perceive."†

4. A very similar conception of the Brahman in its non-dualistic state is reached in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad.‡ It also describes the four stages of consciousness as experienced by the Ātman viz. the waking state, the dreaming state, the state of dreamless sleep, and the fourth and last state where it becomes identical with Brahman. This *Turiya* state is described as follows : "The fourth is not that which is conscious of the subjective, nor that which is conscious of the objective, nor that which is conscious of both, nor that which is simple consciousness, nor that which is an all-sentient mass, nor that which is all darkness. It is unseen, transcendent, inapprehensible, unferrable, unthinkable, indescribable, the sole essence of the consciousness of self, the completion of the world, the

*Br. Ar. Up. IV. 3.

†Brhadaranyaka IV. 3. 30.

‡Mandukya Up. 7.

ever peaceful, the all-blissful, the one unit, this indeed is Ātman." It may be noted that here also two principal features of the Brahman are strongly emphasised, *e.g.* its absolute oneness opposed to all conceptions of duality or plurality and secondly its character as intelligence.

5. We get a similar conception of the Brahman in the teachings of Sanatkumāra to Nārada as given in the seventh chapter of the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad. In his pursuit for the ultimate source of the utmost bliss, Sanatkumāra comes to find that all that is limited or circumscribed cannot give us infinite bliss. The utmost bliss is existent in the infinite state of the Absolute. The description of the state of infinitude as given there is identical with the nondual aspect of Brahman as described in the above passages. Thus it says : "Where there is no second to be seen, no second to be heard, no second to be known, that is Infinity, and where a second is seen, a second is heard, a second is known, that is limited. What is infinite is immortal, and what is limited is mortal." This infinity is very significantly described as subsisting without any support at all, and if it actually did subsist on any thing, it would necessarily have ceased to be the infinite. Therefore, it states, that if any body is unwilling to accept the position that it subsists on nothing, then it may be taken that it subsists on itself, and nothing outside of it.*

6. These passages from the Upaniṣads give us all the essential attributes of the Brahman *per se i. e.* Brahman-in-itself. What Śaṅkara does is to accept this position and to develop it by bringing out its implications and systematizing the conception into a logical consistency. That Brahman may be conceived of in two entirely dissimilar aspects is conceded by him. He characterizes the aspect of plurality, as seen in the

*Chhāndogya Up. VII. 24. 1-2. "स भगवः कस्मिन् प्रतिष्ठित इति स्वे महिनि यदि वा न महिनीति"

phenomenal world of reality, as the Saguna Brahman, although he is not willing to accept it as reality proper. We shall talk more of this aspect of Brahman afterwards. He describes the other aspect of Brahman as attributeless Brahman, which may be better described as Brahman-in-itself, as in his opinion it is in this aspect that we get the true view of reality, which is one abstract unity having the essence of intelligence. A detailed examination of this aspect of Brahman, as conceived by Śaṅkara, forms the special subject matter of this chapter. In fact this dual conception of the Brahman is based on the Upaniṣads as well. In the passages already referred to above it already exists by implication, for, in fact all these passages differentiate the Brahman in its perfect state as objectless perceiving subject—subsisting all by itself, as opposed to the waking and dreaming states, when the Brahman becomes divided into an infinite multiplicity of phenomenal objects. There are passages which bring out this implication more clearly. One example will quite suffice. Thus, in the second chapter of the Brhadāraṇyaka, we get the following passage: "Brahman has two forms, the manifest and the unmanifest, the mortal and the immortal, the static and the dynamic, the real and the apparent."*

7. First of all Śaṅkara had the task of reconciling the two conflicting aspects of Brahman as given in the Upaniṣads. He does it in his own masterly way by a subtle process of logical reasoning which is at once beautiful and convincing. He reduces it to logical consistency. "A thing cannot be conceived as having two sets of attributes which are mutually opposed to each other ; because they are contradictory."† Nor, by being connected with attributes which are not inherent in it, can one kind of thing be transformed into another. For

*Brhadāraṇyaka—II. 3. 1.

†Sāṅkara Bhaṣyam III. 2. 11. नष्टकं वस्तु स्वत एव रूपादिविशेषोपेतं तद्विपर्येतं च इत्यावधारयितुं शक्यं, विरोधात् । etc.

example, when a rock-crystal is transparent, it does not necessarily lose its transparency if we impose on it contradictory characteristics. Nor will this unhappy position justify our "rejecting both the substratum and the forms, for this will necessarily land us into nihilism. We reject something in favour of something which we discover to be more real, as, for example, we reject the theory that a piece of rope is a snake, when we realize that in truth it is a piece of rope. But, if we negate all, what is the positive ground left to stand on?"* There is thus no scope for the suggestion going in favour of rejecting both Brahman (in-itself) as well as his forms. The case is thus made out for accepting the Rūpavat (the thing that takes the forms) and rejecting the Rūpas (forms). The theory is propounded that the forms, both manifest and unmanifest, which are phenomenal, should be discarded in favour of the pure Brahman of whom the forms are appearances. It necessarily follows, therefore, by sheer force of logic that the theory of attributeless Brahman is here sought to be established in the esoteric stage by first attributing some contradictory forms to it and then rejecting those forms in favour of an Absolute. Consistency of thought demands that the ultimate Reality should have no forms—no determination. Brahman is after all conceived as essentially one and eternal. If so, we cannot then associate it with anything that is changing and fleeting, and assumes innumerable forms. It is essentially and absolutely a single entity and never assumes the form of a multiple of beings. What we consider as its multiple aspect, is but a distorted view of it, born of ignorance and faulty perception. Brahman is the one absolute reality.

8. Again, to say that he is formless, unmanifest, immortal, static and real, brings him by sheer force of antithesis in relation to the phenomenal unity of forms, which is manifest, mortal, dynamic and apparent. The same necessity of thought, therefore, demands a synthesis in conceiving Brahman as attributeless,

*कृतस्मृतिविधेस्तु कीदृशो भावः परिशिष्यते ? S. Bhashyam, Br. Sūtr. III. 2. 22.

for, to ascribe attributes is to limit an object. Moreover, the Absolute is not an object at all and as such transcends attributes. It is different from the phenomenal. It cannot therefore be physical, quantitative and fragmentary. No space or time relations can be attributed to it, as it is beyond the scope of both. It cannot be the cause of anything, as in that case, it would be made subject to time relations.* We cannot try to describe it, as in that case, we will have to attribute limited concepts to it and, thereby, to circumscribe it. The intellect is not equal to the task of describing it, for, the intellect adopts a process which seeks to grasp a subject by comparing and associating it with other things. But Brahman is so distinct an entity that it allows itself of no comparison with any other object ; this is inconceivable. Every word, employed to denote a thing, denotes that thing as associated with a certain genus or act or quality or mode of relation.† Brahman has nothing similar to it, nothing different from it, and no internal differentiation, since all these are empirical distinctions. As it is opposed to all empirical existence, it is given to us as the negative of everything that is positively known. Śaṅkara declines to characterize it even as one, but calls it non-dual—advāitam.‡

9. The natural effect of this negative account of Brahman is to rouse a suspicion that the Brahman in its esoteric form is a pure abstraction. Far from it. Śaṅkara conceives it quite differently. He conceives it as the highest reality. It is a demand for logical consistency that makes such a negative description inevitable. It is a limitation of the intellect. This is all the more reason why we should guard against committing the error of imagining Brahman as almost nothing. Śaṅkara says thus : "Is Brahman then non-being ? No, since

*Śaṅkara Bhashyam, Br. Sut. III. 3. 36.

†Śaṅkara Bhashyam, Bhagavadgītā XIII. 12.

‡Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. II. p. 595

even imagined things must have something to stand upon.”* When Brahman is described as unreachable by thought or words it is never the purport of the Upaniṣads to suggest that Brahman is non-being. In fact Brahman is neither being nor non-being. It is not of the order of being with which we are acquainted in our experience of the phenomenal world of appearance. It is something quite different.† It does not follow that it is pure nothing since the negative has its meaning only in relation to the positive. The Upaniṣads as well as Śaṅkara deny of Brahman, both being and non-being of the type with which we are familiar in the world of experience. We can at best say what Brahman is not, and not what it is.‡ “In this sense it is not quite attributeless either. It is something positive, nay, the only positive reality. It is ; but it is not what we can perceive with our senses or describe with the help of words. This is why it is characterized as “Nirguṇo Guṇī” (the one devoid of attributes yet not without attributes).

10. Brahman is not merely being as such but it is more than that. Its most essential characteristic is intelligence, consciousness. Consciousness is not a sort of attribute of Brahman, it is not something which can be quite abstracted from it. It is the very essence of Brahman, it permeates through and through it. The typical example employed in the Upaniṣads regarding this character is this. It has also been accepted by Śaṅkara.§ A lump of salt put in water dissolves into it and then it cannot be grasped separately from the water, because it permeates

*Sāṅkara Bhaṣyam Mandukya Up. 7. शून्यमेव तर्हि ? तन्न, मिथ्याविकल्पस्य निर्निमित्तत्वानुपपत्तेः etc. See also Bhaṣya on Gaudapada Karika II. 32-33. रज्जुवत् संपादिकल्पनाया निरास्यदत्तानुपपत्तिः etc. and again ते चापि प्राणादिभावा अद्वयेनैव सताऽऽत्मना विकल्पिताः । न हि निरास्यदा काचित् कल्पनोपपद्यते ।

†Sāṅkara Bhaṣyam III. 2. 22. न हि एतच्चाद ब्रह्मणो व्यतिरिक्तमस्तीत्यतो नेति नेतीत्याच्यते ।

‡Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. II, p. 536

§Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad S. Bh. II. 4. 12.

through every molecule of water. Even so intelligence is the very essence of Brahman, it runs through and through it and can never be separated from it. It is *Vijñānaghana*. This feature of consciousness is not a quality of Brahman, it is its permanent nature. This characteristic of consciousness continues eternally even without the presence of an object of consciousness. This is compared with the rays of the sun, which go out continuously even in empty spaces. In its esoteric form perception is not possible because there is no object to perceive and not because it ceases to perceive ; just as the sun sends on its rays through space irrespective of the consideration whether any heavenly body can reflect its rays or not. It is the very essence of Brahman (Svarūpa).*

11. There are many passages in the Upaniṣads which attribute bliss as a characteristic of Brahman. In the first portion of this chapter, for example, we have already referred to the description in the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad which characterises Brahman as 'Bhūmānanda.' In the Tāittirīya Upaniṣad, Brahman is described as रसो वै सः (II. 7.) आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् न विभेति कुतश्चन (II. 9.). The Bṛhadāraṇyaka also defines Brahman as bliss and consciousness (विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म)† There is reference to this characteristic also in the Brahmasūtra itself (I. 1. 12.). Śaṅkara, therefore, could not avoid admitting that this is also an essential characteristic of Brahman. It is however quite apparent that this is a half-hearted admission of his. He is not quite willing to admit this as essence of Brahman. That is why his explanation of this and the connected aphorisms of the Brahmasūtra is not quite spirited‡ His commentary suffers from lack of enthusiasm ; we miss very much his characteristic incisiveness here. He simply explains it as follows : These various passages of the Upaniṣads do not refer to the individual

*S. Bh. Br. A. Up. IV. 3. 23. यथादित्यादीनां प्रकाशयित्वं नित्यं नैव स्वाभाविके-
नाक्रियमाणेन प्रकाशेन तदेव च प्रकाशयित्वं मुख्यं प्रकाशयित्वान्नरानुपपत्तेः ।

†Br. A. Up. III. 4. 28.

‡Brahmasūtra I. 1. 12-19.

soul, nor to the Pradhāna of Sāṅkhya Philosophy but to the Brahman itself. By the characterization of Brahman as आनन्दमय, it is not, however, to be construed that Brahman becomes transformed into bliss as suggested by the use of the suffix मयट्, but as the infinite source of bliss. The fact that Śaṅkara is not quite willing to accept this feature as an essential attribute of Brahman, will be further confirmed by the following facts : In his commentary on the Tāittiriya Upaniṣad, Śaṅkara explains that the "self of bliss" does not necessarily indicate Brahman, but it is that which is "its support, its basis." The self of bliss is not so much the essence of Brahman but one of its five outer shells.* It is not so much its essence, therefore, as its "outward characteristic. The Vedāntasāra† accepts the same view-point. It, therefore, seems that Śaṅkara is not quite prepared to admit this as an essential feature of Brahman. He is not quite satisfied with the conventional manner of describing Brahman by ascribing the three attributes of सत्, चित् and आनन्द, but would rather describe him as "सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म"

12. There is a story on this subject which it is well worth mentioning here. It goes like this. The personal view of Śaṅkara on the subject was that the attribute of bliss refers to the individual soul and not the Absolute (परमात्मा). It is said that, when Śaṅkara had written out this interpretation

*अन्नमयादय आनन्दमयपथ्यन्ताः पञ्च बीजाः कल्याणम् । (S. Bh. on Br. Sūt I. 1. 19.)

†Vide Col. Jacob's Ed. p. 13. (Sec 7.) Jibananda Vidyasagar's Ed. (Sec. 22.). Of the Mahāvakyas quoted by Jacob from Mahāvakyavivaraṇa in his notes—only one विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म (Br. A. Up. III. 9. 2-7) gives Ananda as an essence of Brahman, and Śaṅkara explains it as प्रसन्नं शिवमतुलमनायासं नित्यप्रसन्नमेकवचसम् । i.e. all-serene, all-perfect, infinite, unagitated (by desires) all-contented and one unchanging sentiment (i.e. above all pleasure and pain). This आनन्दम् of the white Yajurveda is probably a counterpart of सत्ताम् and चानन्दम् of the black Yajurveda as I have suggested in Sec. V. of Ch. II. This does not in any way attribute feeling in the ordinary sense to the ultimate reality.

Bādarāyaṇa appeared before him and held a discussion with him with a view to winning him over to the viewpoint that it is an attribute of the esoteric Brahman. Neither could defeat the other and the two participants parted company with honours shared. It was after this that Śaṅkara also accepted this view and gave the forced interpretation that the attribute of bliss also applies to the esoteric Brahman. Whatever be the basis of this story, it points to one fact that Śaṅkara was reluctant to admit that the esoteric Brahman could be described as Ānandamaya. The position that Śaṅkara takes up will be further made clear from the general trend of his commentary on the Ānandamayādhikaraṇa in the Brahmasūtra. In the introduction of this discourse, he puts the case of the opposition, which is that this attribute (Ānandamaya) applies to the individual soul or anything other than the esoteric Brahman, with an unusual emphasis.* In controverting this view, he almost half-heartedly lays down that it might be applicable to the *Esoteric* Brahman on the ground that there are specific references in the texts of the Upaniṣads to this effect† and goes on glossing the eight Sūtras of the Adhikaraṇa on this basis. But he does not seem to be happy over this construction and begins a fresh discourse on the Adhikaraṇa with the remark “इदन्तिह वक्तव्यम्” (This must be said, however, in this matter) and concludes that Ānandamaya is not Brahman but like Annamaya etc., is a sheath of the Individual soul. The concluding Śloka also corroborates this view, as there Brahman only has been mentioned undifferentiated (kevalam).‡ The other Sūtras too are to be taken to refer to Brahman indicated by the clause “ब्रह्म पुच्छ प्रतिष्ठा”, which is an allegory.

*Vide S. Bh. on Br. Sut. I. 1. 12 ending with तच्चात् ससाथेवानन्दमय आत्मैतेषां प्राप्त इदमुच्यते ।

† *Ibid* पर एवात्मनन्दमयो भवितुमर्हति । कुतः ? अभ्यासात्, परस्मिन्नेव हि आत्मनानन्दशब्दो बहुव्रीहिभ्यस्यते ।

‡ Vide Śaṅkara's conclusion on Ānandamayādhikaraṇa (I. 1. 12-19) नानन्दमयस्य ब्रह्मत्वम् । निगमनश्रीके ब्रह्मण एव केवलस्याभ्यस्यमानत्वात् । etc.

Section II—Other Views Compared,—
 Plato—Spinoza—Hegel—Bradley.

13. We shall now compare this concept of reality *per se* as propounded by Śaṅkara with the views of other master philosophers, both of the West and the East. This comparative study will help us not only to assimilate the view of Śaṅkara more clearly but will also bring out the points of excellence in Śaṅkara's Philosophy by contrast with other systems. We shall start with European Philosophers first.

14. We shall first of all take up Plato. Plato was the first Philosopher who founded a definitely idealistic system of Philosophy. After being drawn away from sense perception, on the belief that it gives us fleeting changing appearance only, Plato forms the view that genuine knowledge consists of relationships between concepts or universal ideas. The ordinary man would take these concepts to be certain mental products only as contrasted with the particulars, which exist outside and independent of the mind. According to Plato, however, they are real substances, they exist in and for themselves. "They are the original, eternal, transcendent archetypes of things, existing prior to things and apart from them, independent of them, uninfluenced by the changes to which they are subject. The particular objects which we perceive are imperfect copies or reflections of these eternal patterns; particulars may come and particulars may go...but the man type—the human race goes on forever."* These ideas again are arranged in a hierarchy, the higher idea containing lower ones within its folds and in this order we come to the highest idea of all, which is good and identical with God. The universe is thus a logical system of ideas.

15. To account for the world of changing phenomena, however, Plato brings in another principle which he has later

*Thilly—History of Philosophy, p. 63.

designated as "matter." It is, however, a different concept from the ordinary concept of matter and analogically holds the same position in his philosophy as the concept of *Māyā* holds in the system of Śaṅkara. It is the raw material upon which the real ideas are somehow impressed and that accounts for whatever semblance of reality the fleeting phenomenal world may possess. "Nature owes its existence to the influence of the ideal world on non-being or matter. As a ray of light passed through a prism is broken into many rays, so the idea is broken into many objects by matter."*

16. The above account is sufficient to bring out the point of similarity between the two systems. The similarity is indeed very striking. Both systems agree in holding that reality is different from the phenomenal world of many objects. Both systems again agree in holding that reality is a unity and not a plurality. As has been already pointed out the concept of matter is strikingly similar to the concept of *Avidyā* or *Māyā*. It is easy to understand that both are functionally the same. To both is attributed the function of twisting the unity of reality into a multiplicity of phenomenal appearance. They are the basis of the world of appearance. Still there are important points of difference.

17. In the first place it may be noted that the concept of "matter" in the Philosophy of Plato is not quite clearly formed. In fact the term itself appears as inappropriate and does not properly convey the idea of the principle it is expected to signify. It is an ill-executed principle. As to how this principle twists and distorts the one universal abstract reality into the many changing individual entities of phenomenal experience Plato does not enlighten us. Plato leaves us at this. Probably the underlying processes involved in this function of "matter" was not quite understood by him. In contrast with this the

*Thilly, History of Philosophy, p. 65.

doctrine of Māyā is a completely developed principle. The implications contained in this idea are fully developed and explained in the system of Śaṅkara. There is nothing vague or uncertain about it. But we shall talk more of this concept hereafter.

18. Śaṅkara and Plato both search for a permanent singular entity which is distinct and apart from many particulars of sensation as the seat of reality proper. In this point their systems are strikingly similar. Again they agree in holding that this reality is of the nature of spirit as contrasted with matter. According to Śaṅkara it is of the nature of intelligence, and according to Plato it is an abstract idea which is more or less similar. Both are thus strong champions of idealism. But there are intrinsic differences. The Idea of Plato is the result of abstraction. It is the synonym for the most universal of all ideas. The Brahman of Śaṅkara is, however, conceived as something more than an idea. It is essentially intelligence ; it is more than that ; it is subjectified intelligence, though the subject here does not resolve itself into the duality of a subject-object relation. Obviously it is painted as something more tangible than a mere passive idea. It is essentially intelligence and an essentially active principle.

19. We shall now take up the system of Spinoza. Descartes had held that both body and mind, as well as God, are substances, and yet maintained that God was somehow the most important of substances. Spinoza attempted a reconciliation of this inconsistency. If substance is to be conceived as existing in and by itself, there cannot then be the possibility of two substances existing at one and the same time together. If mind and body depend on God for their existence, they cannot be substance really speaking. God alone is the Substance and mind and body, thought and extension are the two attributes of this one substance. These two attributes are infinite and parallel. There is no interaction between them but

the correspondence is due to the fact that they are parallel to each other in every respect. Spinoza admits that there may be many other attributes of God but thought and extension are its main attributes. Spinoza thus explains the whole of reality with the help of the one substance, God, and its two main attributes, thought and extension. As a comprehensive study of reality, it is no doubt a grand and imposing system.

20. From the above account it is quite clear that Spinoza does not seek to differentiate the world of space and thinking souls forming the pluralistic universe from the supreme reality. He incorporates it as part and parcel of the supreme reality, called by him Substance or God. In this way he does not fight shy of pluralism, nor of matter, both of which according to him are but aspects of one and the same reality. But Śaṅkara has a strong prejudice against pluralism and materialism, against all that is part of the phenomenal world of perception. It is all the work of false knowledge, it is a distorted vision of reality, it is at best an illusion. In this way, Spinoza's philosophy is pantheistic, as it identifies God with all that there is. Śaṅkara's view of reality in itself cannot, however, be strictly called Pantheism. It is monism pure and simple, it is monism of the most abstract type. This abstract monism keeps no room for the one reality ever having the possibility of assuming more than one form where it can be called a complex being of many parts. Pluralism is completely banished from it ; it cannot exist there as a formative element or ingredient. On the other hand, Spinoza's system incorporates the pluralistic world of phenomena as well in his conception of reality. It is a pantheism of the concrete type which is ready to embrace in its bosom all the many parts of what it calls the one substance God. Again Śaṅkara's system is essentially idealistic but Spinoza's system is not exclusively so. Śaṅkara's reality is of the essence of intelligence. Spinoza's reality is partly mind and partly matter ; it is both. Spinoza's system does not exclude the world of space, but in Śaṅkara's system it is not recognized as reality at all.

21. In spite of these dissimilarities, however, Spinoza could not shake off his innate love for monism and in putting emphasis to the monistic aspect of reality, we find that Spinoza makes a much nearer approach to Śaṅkara. In fact he almost comes to form a view-point which is very similar to that of Śaṅkara. He explains the world of time and space as modes of the one infinite substance which is God. But, at the same time, he affirms that it is a purely abstract and superficial way of viewing reality. Herein he betrays his innate partiality for an abstract type of monism. He further explains that these modes are not permanent but a temporal expression of the substance, they are transitory and not the essence of the substance. Under the view of eternity, these modes disappear, and then the substance appears as a single entity existing on and by itself. It is needless to add that this aspect of his philosophy hardly differs from the system of Śaṅkara. Further commentary under the circumstances is superfluous.*

22. In this connection we might refer to the system of Hegel which develops a type of pluralistic monism. In the Absolute or the Idea, Hegel finds the nucleus of his monistic system but it is a kind of monism which is distinctly of a separate class from the monism developed by Śaṅkara. To realize this, a brief outline of Hegel's system is necessary. According to him, reality is a living dynamic process which develops. It is the one Absolute which by a process of evolution transforms itself into the many parts which together constitute the universe. This process of evolution is not conducted without plan, it is regulated by law. This law is reason which governs both human thought as well as unconscious nature. Reason is the law, according to which Being is produced or unfolded. It is both subjective and objective. It is both mode of thinking and mode of being. It is these modes that are elaborated by Hegel into a list of categories which, according to him, can be thought out *a priori* as corollaries deduced from the principal category

*Banerji—Genetic History of Philosophy, p. 155.

of Being. In this way with the help of these categories which always come in pairs, he deduces from the Absolute, the subjective minds, the objective world of nature and then the totality of Being, which again he identifies with the Absolute. The universe is thus, according to him an organic unity of differences, a totality of parts, a unified and yet a differentiated whole. "The divine Idea is enriched by its self-expression in nature and in history, and rises through them to self-consciousness, becoming for itself what it was in itself. In the rythmical process of self-alienation and self-deliverance, the universal mind realizes its destiny ; it thinks itself its object and so comes to know its own essence."*

23. We are now in a position to note the main points of difference between the two systems of thought. Hegel concedes the existence of plurality, although as component parts of one system. This Śaṅkara does not. To him, Brahman or the Absolute *per se* is one and absolutely one, it is incapable of division, of change, of evolution. Both, however, agree in one point *e.g.* that the Absolute is essentially of the nature of reason. It is a pluralistic monism that has been developed in Hegel's system, while Śaṅkara's view is absolutely monistic. If any comparison is possible between the two systems, it may be done as between the conception of the Absolute as made by Hegel and the conception of the Saguna Brahman as expounded by Śaṅkara.

24. The other idealistic European thinker, in respect of whom a suggestion of similarity of views arises, is Bradley. His distinction between what is appearance and what is reality, in his book bearing the same title, seems to suggest an apparent parallelism of thought between his views and those of Śaṅkara. But this similarity is only apparent and not real as we shall before long demonstrate. Bradley evolves his system by starting with a critical examination of the various ways of accepting

*Thilly—History of Philosophy, p. 455.

reality. Primary qualities, secondary qualities, time, space,—all are examined and found to be self-contradictory. Phenomena in their isolation are mere appearance and do not give reality, as, in his opinion, the essence of reality is unity and harmony. Discursive thought, in his opinion, cannot give us experience of reality as it proceeds by relationing and dissecting experience. Reality is more of the nature of a feeling than abstract thought. Reality can be experienced if we can combine the immediacy of a direct experience with an effort at grasping the whole reality together. Reality to him then is an entire objectified apprehension of the totality of experience. The finite is appearance, because it gives a wrong view of reality by dividing reality in parts artificially. Nevertheless appearance is not outside reality, for there is nothing beyond appearance. The Absolute, however, is not a mechanical summation of appearance but a consistent whole, in which appearances are contained as elements, and in such a setting, appearances are not detached things either. To quote his own words, "The Absolute is each appearance, and is all, but it is not any one as such." Elsewhere he says, "Appearance without reality would be impossible, for what then could appear? And reality without appearance would be nothing, for there certainly is nothing outside appearance. But, on the other hand, Reality is not the sum of things. It is the unity in which all things coming together, are transmuted, in which they are changed all alike, though not changed equally".*

25. So we are in a position to analyse the differences between the two systems. Detached experience of reality, according to Bradley, is appearance, not in the sense the world of experience is appearance to Śankara, but in the sense that we are thereby taking it out of its setting. If appearance is perceived in its proper setting as an indivisible part of reality, it is reality itself. It is by taking a detached view of it that we make it appearance. To Śankara, however, the whole world

*Appearance and Reality—Bradley, p. 487.

of phenomena is appearance no matter whether we perceive them in isolated detached forms or not. To Bradley reality is one unified whole, but this is made up of innumerable appearances which are however essential indivisible parts of it. In this sense reality according to him is no doubt a unity but it is none-the-less a complex unity. To Śaṅkara however reality is a simple unity, there is not even scope for reading parts in it as appearances. When this is possible, we do not any more see reality as it is but see an illusion which is very much unlike reality proper. This distinction will be more apparent to our mind if we further realise in this connection that Bradley assigns greater importance to appearances or phenomenal experience than Śaṅkara. To the latter it is never a manifestation of reality proper ; it is based on reality but it gives an illusory view of it. To Bradley, however, appearance is a manifestation of reality ; it is also its essential part. The error, in his view, lies in taking it out of its setting. The error, according to Śaṅkara, however, is not merely in taking an artificial view of it but in misinterpreting reality as well. As we have already stated, the essential difference between the two systems lies in the view of reality that each takes. According to one, reality is a complex unity, while, according to the other, reality is a single and uncomplicated and abstract unity.

26. We might in this connection unfold another notable point of difference between the two systems. We have already made it sufficiently clear that, according to Śaṅkara, reality *per se* is not only of the nature of thought but it is essentially a subject without any object to perceive. Bradley, however, seems to entertain a strikingly different view about the nature of reality. The essence of reality, according to him, is subject-object contact, it is the psychological state of perception when by such contact something concrete is perceived. We might elucidate this point by quoting a few lines from his own book. In giving a general idea of the nature of reality, he says : "Can we then, the question is, say anything about the concrete nature of the

system ? Certainly, I think, this is possible. When we ask as to the matter which fills up the empty outline we can reply in one word, that this matter is experience. And experience means something much the same as given and present fact..... Sentient experience, in short, is reality and what is not this, is not real."* It is apparent, therefore, the nature of reality is according to him something like experience. In fact his vision of reality is one comprehensive experience in which the contents are the totality of all appearances. In this point then there is an intrinsic difference between the two systems. Reality is neither subject nor object to him but the joint product of the two, namely experience in which subject and object may be factors but are never supreme.

Section III—Other views Compared—Rāmānuja.

27. Let us take up lastly the Viśiṣṭādvāitavāda associated with the name of Rāmānuja. In it an attempt has been made to unite personal theism with the philosophy of the Absolute, as I have stated in a previous chapter. Two distinct lines of thought run through it concurrently—*first* a theism of the Bhāgavata type, inculcating belief in a personal and transcendent God—a saviour of those who are devoted to him whole-heartedly, and *secondly*, a metaphysics of the Upaniṣadic type agreeing more with the Saprapañcha view of Brahman than with the Niṣprapañcha one, though not accepting even the former in its entirety. The synthesis is as old as the Mahābhārata with its Nārāyaṇīya section, the Gītā and the Viṣṇu-purāṇa. Śaṅkara has commented on the metaphysics of the first two and interpreted them in his own way to suit the main current of Upaniṣadic thought. But the reaction against his purely absolutist philosophy brought about a new formulation of the old synthesis. A move was set about to assert the distinct reality of the Individual soul against the doctrine of Identity in Southern India. The doctrine was systematized afterwards

*Appearance and Reality—p. 144.

by Rāmānuja. His doctrine of knowledge has some peculiar features which we must know before we can appreciate his views about the ultimate Reality. He does not believe, for instance, in a Nirvikalpaka Jñāna (uncharacterized knowledge) of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika type which according to him is a psychological myth. It is impossible for the mind to apprehend an undifferentiated object. Without discrimination there can be no knowledge. Even a primal knowledge like that of a cow first seen must have some characterization—its generic feature at least being apprehended with the cow. It is Nirvikalpaka, because the discriminating character is obscure—because it does not revive any former impression, not because it is altogether absent. In this sense, the knowledge might remain Nirvikalpaka even at the second or third apprehension *i.e.* until such revival takes place. Savikalpaka knowledge implies “the cognition of the new in the light of the old.” All perceptual experience, according to Rāmānuja, is complex and involves a judgment. Savikalpaka experience differs from recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) in this, that, while, in both a present object is associated with the revival of a past impression, in the former it is only the impression of the attributive element that revives and in the latter that of the particular individual does so also. In recognition one and the same object is perceived twice, and there is a specific reference to the time and place of the two cognitions. In Savikalpaka experience different objects of the same type are cognized without such specific reference. This view of knowledge leads Rāmānuja to assert that perception is impossible of a Nirviśeṣa-vastu, an unqualified object; and even the Ultimate Reality which is an object of knowledge, according to him, is *Saguṇa* or complex. This is a radical difference from Śaṅkara who maintains that the Ultimate Reality is *Nirguṇa*. Rāmānuja’s classification of ultimate objects is also peculiar to his doctrine. He does not distinguish between spirit and matter as is generally done, but between matter (*Jaḍa*) and non-matter (*Ajaḍa*), to include Jñāna, which is neither spirit nor matter, in one of these classes. Jñāna, unlike matter, can manifest itself

and other objects just as a lamp does, but it always does so for another, wherein it is unlike spirit which can show itself alone, and not anything else, for itself. Jñāna which is a substance in this sense is subsidiary (dharmabhūta) to the Jīvas and Īśvara, the two kinds of spirit recognized in the system, and which are also called Jñāna in a higher sense. The subsidiary Jñāna is eternally associated with a subject—Jīva or Īśvara—and constitutes its unique adjunct ; and by coming in contact with an object by “flowing out”, it is able to manifest the object to the subject. Throughout mundane existence it ever endures—even in deep sleep it is, but it does not show itself because it can do so only along with an object. Then Jīva remains self-conscious with its unrevealed presence. Dream-objects are postulated to be actually present, hence in dreams the Jñāna is manifest however dimly or hazily on account of the greater impediments than during waking. In mokṣa, freedom is restored to it, it becomes all-pervasive and then there is nothing outside its range. The liberated soul, therefore, knows everything. Rāmānuja’s view of knowledge is called Satkhyāti, for, according to him, whatever is cognized actually exists, and knowledge in the absence of a real object corresponding to its content is inconceivable. It is not enough to have a presentative basis only outside for securing this correspondence. Consistently, therefore, Rāmānuja holds bare identity as a metaphysical fiction which can never be known, for the character of an object is always as is given in knowledge. In illusions, when error arises from likeness, he admits a partial identity of material. Where shell is mistaken for silver, there is in the shell, though to an extremely limited extent, the very substance which constitutes silver. Obviously, in such a position, truth is not the whole truth, for when we are not in error we are overlooking this part of the constitution of the shell. In the case of error arising from defects of the organ of vision and the like, the explanation is more arbitrary and unconvincing. The aim of Satkhyāti, however, is to show that Jñāna never deviates from reality—not even in illusion, where there is an

akhyāti appended ; and that even in what is termed 'private' objects, 'there is no ideal or purely subjective element.' The distinction between error (Bhrama) and truth (Pramā) cannot be said to be due to mere incomplete knowing, for there is some incompleteness even in truth, and from a theoretical standpoint, therefore, the distinction does not exist in this sense. But, as the realities in the error e. g. water in the mirage, silver in the shell etc. cannot be put to practical use, the distinction becomes significant from the practical standpoint. "All knowledge without exception is valid and necessarily so, but such validity need not guarantee that what is known is adequate to satisfy a practical need."* "*Pramā* not only apprehends rightly so far as it goes, but also goes far enough to be of service in life ; Bhrama also is right so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough, and therefore fails to help us in the manner in which we expect it to do"†

28. Rāmānuja's Absolute is a combination of three real ultimate factors (tattva-traya)—chit, achit, and Īśvara, as we have said in chapter III, and, though they are equally ultimate, the first two are absolutely dependent on the third. Their relation is conceived as that subsisting between body and soul. Īśvara is the soul not only of inorganic nature but also of the spirits or Jīvas. Rāmānuja's conception of the Absolute may, therefore, be taken to be that of an organic unity in which, as in a living organism, one element predominates over and controls the rest. The subordinate elements are called the Viśeṣaṇas and the predominating element the Viśeṣya, and conversely the predominant one may be conceived of as the Viśeṣaṇa of the subordinate ones as Viśeṣyas, as by hypothesis none of them can exist separately, the complex whole (Viśiṣṭa) in which they are included being conceived of as a unity. This is why the system is called 'Viśiṣṭādvāita.' In order to establish the

*M. Hiriyanṇa's Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p. 394.

†M. Hiriyanṇa's Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p. 395.

unity, Rāmānuja formulates the relation of Aprthaksiddhi or inseparability between the attributive and the attributed—the Viśeṣaṇa and the Viśeṣya. As his doctrine of knowledge alters the nature of the epistemological problem, for, validity, according to him, is not the only decisive factor in knowledge, but its bearing on practical life has also to be taken into account, so also his view of the Ultimate Reality alters the nature of the metaphysical problem. Here also it is a practical exigency to secure Upaniṣadic support for a creed, that has served human needs in an excellent manner, that leads to the synthesis of the Vāiṣṇavic and the Upaniṣadic teachings. The resulting discrepancy is evident in the conception of the Absolute in the system. Rāmānuja admits several ultimate entities, but holds at the same time that there is only One Being—the being of the subsidiary elements being derived from it. If they are existentially one how can the distinction between them be ultimate? This lack of independent being, as we have stated before, is just what is meant by Śaṅkara when he denies reality to elements of diversity in the Absolute. If, to avoid the difficulty, we assume that each element has its own separate being, the combination is no longer an Absolute, and the unity will only be the unity of a team. The relation of unity-in-diversity is not countenanced by Rāmānuja. The notion of Aprthaksiddhi, on which the conception of Viśiṣṭādvāita is based, is as unsatisfactory as the notion of Samavāya which it is intended to replace. Both are imaginary relations—the Samavāya trying to unite what are supposed to be distinct and Aprthaksiddhi trying to separate what is supposed to be one. Both represent vain efforts to find a halfway house between inclusion and exclusion. As a concession to Vāiṣṇavism, the system secures ultimate reality for the souls as well as for matter, again its loyalty to the Upaniṣads drives it to modify it—thus conceiving of a nityabibhūti—a higher *ajada Prakṛti*—which, not very cogently is altogether distinct from *jada prakṛti*. Īśvara again, in this view, is self-determining and the universe, of which he is the sole cause, develops from within, unaided by

any external agency. This would ascribe change to God and go against the teaching of the Upaniṣads. But Rāmānuja explains that God does not suffer change in himself but only through the entities comprehended in the whole, of which he is the controlling principle. This is what he calls *Sadvāraka* or secondary (lit. by an opening) change. But to say that He remains changeless while his inseparable attributes are changing is inconsistent. The whole is called *Īśvara* by Rāmānuja and may be taken to be his Absolute, the dominant factor is also called *Īśvara* in a sense which makes Him 'antaryāmin' dwelling within whatever is in this universe. He manifests Himself in various ways to help His devotees and can have diverse forms. He has benevolent qualities of the highest degree, and the negation of some qualities in the Upaniṣads only posits others characterizing Him, or the same qualities not in their ordinary sense but in their perfection. This theistic ideal presents several difficulties.—To mention only a few of them,—it makes God's benevolence and power irreconcilable with the presence of evil in the world ; it makes God's purpose to create such a world with apparent inequalities incomprehensible ; to ascribe a motive to Him would be to question His perfection or all-sufficiency (*nityatṛptatva*) ; to deny a motive would be to make Him an automaton or to attribute caprice to Him ; to say that He modifies the fruit of action for His devotees would be to ascribe to Him a weakness which is more human than divine ; to say that He does not do so would do away with all need for *Upāsanā*, and to say that He cannot do so would be to limit His power. Both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja have some solutions not without appeal to religious minds—for these difficulties. But Śaṅkara scores over Rāmānuja by reminding us that these incongruities and their suggested solutions "have reference to the world of names and forms, brought into existence by *Avidyā*, and therefore not final."* The relative must point beyond itself for its complete

* *Śaṅkara Bhashyam, Brahmasūtra* II. 1. 32-36. 'न चैव परमार्थविषया दृष्टिश्रुतिः, अविद्याकल्पितनामरूपव्यवहारगोचरत्वात्, ब्रह्मात्मभावप्रतिपादनपरत्वाच्च—इतीतदपि नैव विद्यार्तस्यम्'

explanation, and that has been supplied by the Identity of Brahman and Ātman. From the stand-point of speculative philosophy, Rāmānuja's view that the universe and the Jīvas actually emerge from Īśvara makes his system an Īśvara-pariṇāmavāda which is far removed from Śaṅkara's doctrine. Śaṅkara refuses to accept a changing Brahman as ultimate. Again Rāmānuja's conception of mokṣa is not merely freedom from mundane existences but enjoyment, in the presence of God, of the highest bliss in a supramundane sphere. The imperfect Prākṛtic body of the Jīva is then replaced by a perfect one, so that release does not mean a disembodied state. Nor does Rāmānuja admit a Jīvanmukta state which is admitted in Śaṅkara's doctrine, for Rāmānuja is no believer in karma-sannyāsa at any stage of life, nor in release except in after-life and in "the highlands of the blest" beyond our mundane sphere.

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Bhāṣāparichhedah with Siddhāntamuktāvalī.

Śaṅkara O Rāmānuja (Beng.) by Rajendranath Ghosh.

A STUDY OF ŚAṆKARA

CHAPTER V

The Categories of *Maya* and *Avidya*.

Section I—The doctrine of Identity leads to the categories of
Īśvāra—Māyā and Avidyā.

1. The categories of Māyā and Avidyā occupy a very important position in the system of Vedānta as propounded by Śaṅkara. In a former chapter we have already tried to give a picture of Brahman *per se* as painted by the master Philosopher. Brahman as painted there is a static rational entity seated alone in its lonely grandeur. What a contrast it is to the ordinary phenomenal existence which our perceiving faculties present to us. They seem to be absolutely opposed in nature to one another. Yet it is a matter of profound conviction with Śaṅkara that this evanescent phenomenal world of many, always involved in mutual contradictions and subject to the limitations of space and time, is rooted in Brahman, the ultimate reality. It is existent no doubt, but it is not real. It is founded on Brahman. How then such a universe, which is so differently shaped from the ultimate reality on which it is based, is brought about? How is it that the eternal Brahman appears in our senses as the phenomenal world of many? It is the categories of Māyā and Avidyā that seek to enlighten us in the basic question of the Vedānta Philosophy. How is the rope mistaken for a snake? The answer is that it is an illusion of the mind. How does the magician produce the imaginary tree? The answer is that it is magic that produces the illusion. Māyā and Avidyā occupy the same position as illusion does in helping to explain how a rope can be mistakenly perceived for a snake or an illusion of a tree can be created by the magician. They practically answer the central problem of the Vedānta Philosophy.

2. The categories of Avidyā and Māyā are, therefore, the link between the Brahman *per se* and the manifold world of phenomena which is the object of experience of our waking hours. They reconcile these two diametrically opposed perceptions of Brahman by explaining how this is caused. The basic idea of Śaṅkara's philosophy is that reality is indivisibly one. Yet the world of experience which takes its rise from this reality appears in the garb of many. If reality is conceived as a plurality of many independent and separate substances or even as a unity which is complex in its nature, the need for the introduction of such categories as Māyā and Avidyā would not have been felt. It is the need for explaining the co-existence—if at all we could use such a term here—of reality *per se*, which is essentially one, and reality as perceived by us, which is many, that logically gave rise to the development of these categories. For a proper appreciation of them, therefore, it is necessary that we should re-introduce the doctrine of identity of Śaṅkara which establishes the simple unity of reality *per se*.

3. Śaṅkara paints Brahman as an absolute unity which is incapable of division or partition. He also holds firmly to the faith that the world of phenomenon is not altogether a chimera. It is rooted in Brahman—it takes its rise from Brahman. Brahman is the material cause of the world of phenomena. It is not only that. It is also the efficient cause of the universe, for there can be no third outside agency to give shape to the world of experience. Brahman is thus both the material and the efficient cause of the world of phenomena. Yet the two things are absolutely different from each other. Brahman is unity while the world of experience is a bewildering mass of multiplicity. It is to explain this enigma that Śaṅkara formulates the doctrine of identity. He does not view Brahman as the cause of the universe in the ordinary sense. He says that the two are identical. The world of experience is not a transformation of the Absolute unity we call Brahman.

This is what happens when we get *Parināma* (transformation) as when milk is transformed into curd. The world of phenomena is the effect of Brahman in the sense that they are identical. The relation of Brahman, the Absolute unity, with the world of experience which is a multiplicity, is one of non-difference (*ananyatva*)* They are both identical although they are so different. What makes them different is distortion or *vivarta*.† Intrinsically they are one and the same but by distortion they look different. We might in this connection refer to the typical analogies used in this connection. The rope and the illusory snake are identical although in a way through some distorted perception the rope appears as a snake. The stars, as we know, do not twinkle at all, it is the atmosphere through which we see them that makes them appear to do so. The star as it is, is identical with the twinkling star that we see, although they appear to be different. In this sense, therefore, the world of experience and the Absolute reality are identical. What is one, appears as the manifold changing world of experience. Brahman as it is and the world of phenomena as we experience through our senses, are identical. To our perceptive faculties, however, Brahman is represented as many. It is an appearance, an illusion, a distorted view of reality *per se*.

4. The question necessarily arises how does this distortion take place. It is in explaining the agency by which this is caused that the two categories of *Māyā* and *Avidyā* are introduced into the system of Śaṅkara's Philosophy. They are more or less the same. We shall analyse them in greater details in a later portion of this chapter but it is necessary at this stage to briefly describe the important functions they play in creating the illusory world of phenomena.

**Sankara Bhashyam* I. 1. 4.

†*Vide Siddhantalessa*, I. Sec. 28. p. 68. (J. Vidyasagara's Ed.) for a definition of this term.

5. It is, in this connection that the doctrine of Māyā is introduced in Śaṅkara's Philosophy. Māyā is both the objective world of experience as we perceive it, as well as the power that causes the universal illusion of this world of multiplicity. Brahman cannot be *per se* the efficient cause of this phenomenal world. That will not keep it indeterminate. Hence the conception of a determinate Brahman or Īśvara. In higher wisdom Īśvara is non-existent. It has its utility in the lower plane of empirical knowledge. Śaṅkara does not take upon himself the task of demonstrating the existence of such Īśvara. He considers such proofs unconvincing even as Kant did. To him, it is a concept which is practically useful in our world of experience. It has pragmatic necessity. "The reality of Īśvara, in Śaṅkara's Philosophy, is not a self-evident axiom, is not a logical truth but an empirical postulate which is practically useful"* Its basis is scriptural testimony. It is the efficient cause that produces the world of experience. "It is Īśvara from which proceeds the origin, subsistence and dissolution of the world, which is extended in names and forms, which includes many agents and enjoyers, which contains the fruit of works, specially determined according to space, time and cause ; a world which is formed after an arrangement inconceivable even for the mind—this omniscient and omnipotent cause is Īśvara."†

6. The power that Īśvara wields in bringing about this world of experience is Māyā. At least we can start with conceiving Māyā as such. Māyā linked up with Brahman gives us Īśvara. Māyā in this sense is the Śakti or energy of Īśvara. It is his creative power and co-exists eternally with him. In this sense it is comparable to the Prakṛti of the Sāṅkhya Philosophy.‡ But unlike the Pradhāna of the Sāṅkhya system it

*Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. II. p. 545.

†Sankara Bhashyam I. 1. 2.

‡Sankara Bhashyam II. 1. 14. "ईश्वरस्य सायाशक्तिः प्रकृतिः"

is not independent of Īśvara.* It is a part of Īśvara even as heat is concomitant with fire.

7. It is this Māyā that works this distortion (Vivarta) of Brahman. Brahman *per se* is an absolute unity but Brahman translated for our senses through the agency of Māyā is the manifold world of experience. The one appears as many. The one is intrinsically one and always one, but the multiplicity that we experience is an aspect that it takes for our senses under the influence of Māyā. As such, the appearance of the objective world as many is itself looked upon as Māyā. Māyā accomplishes this function of distorting reality into a multiplicity by its twofold function of hiding the unity of Brahman (Āvaraṇa) and misrepresenting it as many (Vikṣepa). The objective world itself is thus described as Māyā and, in this sense, it is synonymous with appearance or the world of experience. Looked at from the subjective point of view this Māyā is again Avidyā. It is false perception that creates the appearance of a plurality. Looked at as the objective world of experience it is Māyā, but looked at as the mental factor that causes this distorted perception of reality it is Avidyā. This Avidyā is not purely subjective. It is an objective force. It is common to all (Sarvasādhāraṇa). It is the faculty in our mind that disintegrates reality into a multiplicity. "It is the twist of the mind which makes it impossible for it to see things except through the texture of space-time-cause."† In fact it is identical with our ordinary cognitive faculty which cannot flourish except on the assumption of a subject-object relation. This is the defect of all empirical knowledge, which always attributes something different to the subject as its predicate. This attributing of a second to the subject is Adhyāsa, which is defined as attributing to a thing something that is different from it.‡ This is so, because Brahman *per se* or reality is

* Sāṅkara Bhaṣyam I. 2. 22 'न' 'स्वतन्त्र' तत्त्वम् ।

† Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. II. p. 575.

‡ 'अध्यासो नाम अतस्मिन् सद्वृत्तिः' ।

free from all distinction of subject and object. This empirical knowledge fails to give us, therefore, the true nature of things.* In this sense, Māyā is the objective result of the finitizing process of Avidyā. The latter is the cause and the former is the effect. They are, therefore, practically the same thing viewed differently. For a better appreciation of the close relation of the two, we might even identify them and say that they are identical. The tendency of our minds of seeing reality, which is one, as many is Avidyā and the appearance of the one as many is Māyā. What is Māyā from the objective side is Avidyā from the subjective side. "When we look at the problem from the objective side we speak of Māyā, and when from the subjective side we speak of Avidyā. Even as Brahman and Ātman are one, so are Māyā and Avidyā one."†

Section II—Śaṅkara's Source of Inspiration.

8. We shall now try to trace the source from which Śaṅkara drew the inspiration for his philosophical system. For this purpose we must inevitably turn to the Upaniṣads, which are as a matter of fact the central source from which all systems of Indian Philosophy have drawn freely. There are many passages in the Upaniṣads supporting the Māyā doctrine. It will not be true to say that we find the doctrine completely evolved there. What we get is the slow evolution of a line of thought which, if systematized and developed, would give us this doctrine in its entirety. In fact this is what Śaṅkara has done.

9. We might in this connection start with quoting the following passage which we get in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad "Indra assuming many forms by his transfiguring activities moves about. The horses attached are ten hundreds."‡ In

* Śaṅkara Bhaṣyam I. 1. 4. where Śaṅkara calls this "वेद-वेदिह-वेदनामेदः" as "अविद्याकल्पितः" ।

† Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. II. p. 587.

‡ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up. II. 5 19.

fact it is a quotation from the R̥gveda itself where we get the whole stanza of which the first part is omitted here. It is well worth quoting here the first part also. "An image of all forms, he becomes all forms. That form of his is for appearance."* The passage is no doubt strikingly significant. We actually get the very word appearance here also and the very central theme of the Māyā doctrine is strongly suggested in these few lines. In fact Śaṅkara has used it as one of the main pillars of his theory. This will be borne out by the manner in which he explains this passage in his commentary on the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. There he uses Indra as a synonym for Brahman and the horses as synonyms for sense organs. The meaning that inevitably follows is that Brahman through the power of his Māyā appears in form of many and in that state the number of his sense organs varies according to the particular form he takes, in one form they number ten and in another a hundred or even ten hundreds. So practically the whole Māyā theory has been deduced from this one single passage.

10. There are other important passages to which we might make reference at this stage. In the story of Sanat Kumāra and Nārada†, we get that Sanat Kumāra gives an exposition of the highest truth or reality proper. In the end of that exposition we get the following remark :‡ "When none sees none else, none knows none else, none hears none else, that is the Infinity (Absolute) and where one sees another, one hears another and one knows another that is under limitation. What is infinite is eternal and what is finite is subject to death." The central idea behind this passage is that the finite world of sense-perception is composed of things which mutually limit each other. It is in such a stage that we get change,

*रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव तदस्य रूपं प्रतिचक्षणाय ।

इन्द्रो मायाभिः पुरुरूप ईयते युक्ता ह्यस्य हरयः शता दश । R̥gveda VI. 47. 18.

†Chhândogya Up. Chap. VII.

‡Chhândogya Up. VII. 24. 1. यव नान्यत् पश्यति नान्यच्छृणोति नान्यद्विजानाति ।

स भूमाऽयं यवान्यत् पश्यत्यन्यच्छृणोतीत्यादिविजानाति तदस्यम् । यो वै भूमा तदस्य तमयं यदस्य तन्मर्गम् ।

variation, and mutation. Where, however, there is no subject-object relation we get the infinite Absolute Brahman (Bhūman being a synonym for Brahman), and such Brahman is immutable and eternal. Here the distinction between the two states—the state of the phenomenal world of multiplicity and the state where no subject-object relation exists,—has been clearly brought out. By implication, therefore, it no doubt suggests the Māyā doctrine. If we go one step further and develop the implication, we get the Māyā doctrine in its entirety.

11. In some passages of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad we not only get a confirmation of the above line of thought, but in addition we get a definite suggestion that the world of sense perception is an appearance. One such goes further than the above passage and makes probably the nearest approach to the Māyā doctrine itself. In his exposition of the nature of reality to his wife Mātreyī, Yājñavalkya draws a line of distinction between two different states of reality. We might in this connection quote the relevant portions of the passage : “Where there is an appearance of duality one smells another, one sees another, one hears another, one accosts another, one perceives another and one knows another but where everything is reduced to the Ātman, who will smell whom, who will hear whom, who will accost whom ? etc.”* Here clearly there is a contrast made between two planes of reality. There is a plane of duality based on the subject-object relation, where we get the phenomenal world of experience. Secondly, there is the other plane where the subject-object relation is obliterated in the unity of the Absolute and the result is we cannot get there the world of experience. These two planes are very well comparable to the two planes of reality as conceived by Śaṅkara, namely Brahman *per se* as a simple unity and the world of sense experience which, according to him, is an appearance. What is more significant here is the use of the word इव in “यत्र हि

*Brhadāraṇyaka Up. II. 4. 14.

द्वैतमिव भवति. Here not only a contrast is drawn between the two states but there is a positive suggestion that the world of phenomenon consisting of subject-object relation is an appearance. This, by logical construction, should be the force of the expression द्वैतमिव भवति. This marks, therefore, a distinct advancement on the position attained in the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad to which we have made reference immediatly above. In another part of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad we get a similar remark from the lips of the same Philosopher, Yājñavalkya. The sense is the same though a slight modification in language is used. It runs as follows : "Where there is as if a second there one sees another, one smells another, one talks to another etc."* This is significant as a confirmation of the passage already referred to above.

12. In subsequent Upaniṣads we find the position a little more clarified. Not only is the world of phenomena distinguished from the state of non-duality, but there is an inclination to paint the ultimate reality as something which is an abstract unity incapable of division or change. It is something which is practically beyond the reach of perceptual knowledge. We might in this connection refer to the following passage appearing in the Katha Upaniṣad :† "(The ultimate reality) is beyond sound, beyond touch, beyond form, without change, incapable of taste, it is eternal and without smell."

13. From the above analysis it will clearly be evident that the doctrine of Māyā as developed was already available in the passages of the Upaniṣads although in a germinal form. What was already there by implication was amplified and reduced to a systematized doctrine. That is the contribution of Śaṅkara.

14. We have seen that in the Māyā doctrine which is

*Brhadaranyaka Up. IV. 3. 31.

†अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमवयव' तथारस' नित्यमगन्धवच्च यत् । Katha Up. I. 3. 5.

the special feature of the Vedānta system there are three very important concepts which have important roles to play, *i. e.* the Personal God or Īśvara, Māyā and Avidyā. We have now arrived at a stage where a detailed study of these concepts is called for.

Section III—Character of Īśvara – His relation with the phenomenal world.

15. In a former paragraph (5), we have described the Īśvara as more or less a postulate which is practically useful. It has been suggested that this conception has no basic reality behind it. No doubt some passages in Śaṅkara's writings seem to make out such a theory, but it would be hardly fair to say that his conception of Īśvara is almost as empty as that. Brahman *per se* is a thing apart, which does not allow any scope for the play of change and creation. Yet such world of perception consisting of a multiplicity of beings mutually co-existing is for ever presented to our senses. The question that arises is whether this manifestation of the world of multiplicity is a true development of the essential reality, or it is a mere distortion. To the Objective Idealist seeing in this universe of perception a natural development of the absolute reality, it is not a distortion but a natural evolution. To Śaṅkara, it is essentially a distortion. If so, the world of sense-perception becomes a pure appearance—a pure illusion. Yet it appears that Śaṅkara does not seem to be exclusively wedded to such a theory of reality alone. Probably he was torn between two distinct tendencies of thought. While logical necessity of his conception of reality as an essentially inseparable unity demanded that the world of phenomenon should be regarded as a distortion—as an illusory perception—of what is essentially an abstract unity, the stronger demands of practical necessity asked him to see something more than a mere illusion in the phenomenal world, a substratum behind it which is more or less permanent and is objectively real. This will be best borne out by his conception of Īśvara.

16. A changeless and abstract Brahman is never capable of producing the phenomenal world of multiplicity, which is objectively presented to each subject uniformly as the same. If it is an illusory perception at all, it has an objective substratum behind it. It is not the subjective perception of one individual alone, but is the common perception of all individuals for all times. It has its continuity, it has its objective basis. The scriptures contain any number of passages to suggest that Brahman is both the material and the efficient cause of the universe. They say that the cause from which (proceeds) the origin, subsistence and dissolution of the world, which is extended in names and forms, which includes many agents and enjoyers, which contains the fruit of works, specially determined according to space, time and cause,—a world which is formed after an arrangement inconceivable even for the mind—this omniscient and omnipotent cause is the Brahman.* It is as Īśvara that the Brahman performs all these functions. Brahman brought down to the plane of the phenomenal universe is Īśvara. The one all-pervading power that directs all processes in the phenomenal world is Īśvara.† The objectivity that there exists in the phenomenal world is due to the operations of Īśvara.

17. This will be very clear from one very important theory of Śaṅkara bearing on this point. This world of phenomenon is not such a distortion as is to be viewed as a mere accident. It is not an accident, it is thought out. The multiplicity of the world of phenomenon is not a thing that goes away completely with the dissolution of the world. It has its seed firmly rooted in the very nature of Brahman. Thus Śaṅkara thinks that, prior to creation, the world of phenomenon exists in the mind of Īśvara as its object. He says that 'the work of creation becomes the subject matter of the knowledge

* Śaṅkara Bhaṣyam I. 1. 2.

† वेदान्तेषु सृष्टि-स्थिति-संहारकारणत्वेन ब्रह्मणः प्रसिद्धत्वात् । S. Bhaṣyam I. 2. 9.

of Īśvara before creation'.* He further develops this idea and says that in that stage of potentiality "the names and forms are neither to be defined as beings nor as their opposites, they are not evolved though striving towards evolution." This idea he further elucidates in his commentary of the last passages of the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad.† Here he says not only that the world of phenomena exists as an object in the mind of Īśvara but he goes much further than that. He even attributes to Brahman *per se* the function of holding within itself the germ of all names and forms. It seems that he thinks that the ultimate essence of the phenomenal world is to be traced in the nature of Brahman itself. Multiplicity and change, though distinct from Brahman, are contained in a germinal form in it. We might quote his own words. "These names and forms exist inside Brahman and, although Brahman is not *touched* by name and form, yet Brahman is their carrier,—Brahman is of such character." This almost amounts to conceding that the germ of the world of multiplicity, which is presented to us in the plane of sense perception, is contained in the unity of Brahman. The multiplicity is, therefore, not an illusion grounded on faulty sense-perception but almost a necessary phase of the Absolute's life history. It is grounded on the Absolute itself, it is almost a part of it.‡

18. A stronger recognition of the sound groundings and foundation of the phenomenal world of multiplicity will be found in Śaṅkara's theory of the teleology of creation. Why does God create? Is he impelled by any special desire which acts as the driving force from behind? Śaṅkara repudiates such a theory. The teleological conceptions of human beings do not apply to God, for He is characterised by absolute

* कश्चै यत् प्रागुत्पत्तौ रौच्यस्य ज्ञानस्य विषयीभवति । S. Bhashyam I. 1. 5.

† Śaṅkara Bhashyam, Chh. Up. VIII. 14. 1.

‡ In the *Saṅkshepasārīraka* Ch. I. Sl. 513—550. (q. v.) the same view is held. For different views on the point *vide* *Siddhantaśaṅkara-grahaṇa* I. Sec, 29-38. pp. 71-99. (J. Vidyasagara's Ed.)

contentment.* God is not impelled by any special motive or purpose. Out of the fulness of His power arises the desire for sport (Līlā),† that is the driving force of this creation. “It is the spontaneous overflow of God’s nature (Svabhāva) even as it is the nature of man to breathe in and out.”‡ In this matter Śaṅkara has compared God to a king who has vast powers and vast wealth and is completely satisfied with all desires. Just as such a king may feel himself inclined to any sort of hobby not for any special purpose or desire, even so the supreme God in the fulness of his joy and infinite power feels itself drawn into the sport of creation that reveals itself to us as a world of multiplicity subjected to constant change and interaction.§

Section IV—Concept of Māyā—and its implications.

19. Before discussing any further about the spirit in its diverse phenomenal aspects, it will be profitable at this stage to try to ascertain what is exactly meant by the concept of Māyā. In plain words we can put the question as this : In what sense is the phenomenal world a Māyā or illusion ? The position seems to be confused and it is no wonder that we often find people holding mistaken ideas about what this concept actually signifies. Some people go to the extreme length of thinking that this signifies that according to the Philosophy of Śaṅkara the whole phenomenal world is an out and out illusion, it is of the same stuff almost as our dreams are made of. It is all the more reason, therefore, that this point should be properly clarified here.

20. This task has been to a certain extent made easy by the above exposition of the character of Īśvara. An attempt

*परितृप्तम् । शङ्करभाष्यम् । Br. Sut. I. 2. 32,

†परमेश्वरस्य लीलैव केवलं यम् अपरिमितशक्तित्वात् ॥ S. Bh., Br. Sut. I. 2. 33.

‡Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy Vol. II. p. 557.

§एवमौच्यतेऽपि अनपेक्षा किञ्चित् प्रयोजनान्तरं स्वभावादेव केवलं लीलारूपा प्रवृत्तिर्भविष्यति । शङ्करभाष्यम् । Br. Sut. I. 2. 33,

has been made there to show that the concept of Īśvara or the dynamic Brahman is not altogether devoid of reality ; it is not a mere working hypothesis but some thing more. That is one point we should take note of in this connection.

21. Even the most extreme phase of Śaṅkara's conception of the abstract unity of Brahman *per se* concedes some broad facts which we might conveniently summarise here. They make out so to say a realistic basis for the phenomenal world of sense-perception, even in such a hostile setting as the concept of the Absolute as an abstract unity.

22. The first thing that is clear is that Śaṅkara rejects the theory of extreme subjectivism. He takes great pains to refute the Kṣaṇabhaṅgavāda culminating in the Sūnyavāda and Vijñānavāda of Buddhism. He does not consider the world of phenomenon to be made up of the same stuff as dream. "Not even the mirage can exist without a basis."* It is based on Bhrama, it has an objective reality. It is the common perception of all (सर्वसाधारण). It is an objective force which makes all perceiving minds perceive it in the same form and shape.

23. The second point to note is the fact that it is made of the same stuff as Brahman itself. Brahman is its material cause. The world of sense-perception has not sprung out of nothing. It is contained in Brahman, it is rooted in Brahman. Brahman is in the world though not in the form in which we perceive it. It is Brahman itself although we do not perceive it as such. It is Brahman appearing in a distorted form. It is not therefore an illusion in the quite ordinary sense. There is a defect in the perception which makes it appear as different from what it really is. The factor that is responsible for this distorted view is not a mere subjective factor. It is a

psychological constituent of every perceiving mind, it is a defect in the constitution of our intellectual faculties. It is not merely that, it is also an objective force which, as Māyā, distorts Brahman. It is not exactly an illusion but a perception which has its objective counterpart.

24. Looked at from this point of view the doctrine of Māyā, based on the conception of a dynamic Brahman, will not after all look as illusory as the illusory snake or the pearl. The distortion that is read is not so much to be characterized as an illusion, as an interpretation from a lower angle of vision. Looked at from the perceptual stage of subject-object relation, the world of sense-perception is in the truest sense an objective reality. Looked at from a higher plane of vision which cares only for logical consistency and thorough unity, this universe is resolved to an abstract unity which is indivisibly one. It is really a question of rising to a different plane of vision. Looked at from the point of view of absolute unity, the dualism of the subject-object relation appears to be a distortion. It is the one appearing by some mysterious agency as the manifold of sense-perception which is Māyā. Looked at from the empirical stand-point of practical life this Māyā or finitizing agency is no more an illusion but an objective truth testified to by the senses. Life is not thus literally a dream nor our knowledge a mere phantasm.

Section V—The Cosmic Sākṣin—the Passive and Active Elements in Īśvara—Its relation with Māyā and the Universe.

25. In analysing knowledge in accordance with the Advaitic doctrine of Śaṅkara, we have spoken of the changeless and enduring element in experience,* the Sākṣin, which does not cease even in deep sleep. It is individual and determinate being associated with a particular Antaḥkaraṇa. The Sākṣin

* *Vide* Ch. II. Sec. vi.

the Jīvas are many, while Īśvara is one. Īśvara is the sole cause of the universe in every sense, as we have said above, but as the Sākṣin (or psychological) element in him is passive, it can only act in conjunction with Māyā, his dynamic element, to be the source of this universe. Māyā is said to be the Śakti or potency inherent in Īśvara through which he manifests this objective world of diversity with its names and forms.* The things arising through Māyā are regarded as real—but this reality is only relative. These are phenomenally experienced (dṛśya) and so far they cannot be unreal, for the absolutely unreal can only be verbal *e.g.* the barren woman's son, the hare's horn etc. Nor can they be regarded as real in their own right, for being objective (jāda) they are dependent for their being on the spirit. They are, therefore, Sadasadvilakṣaṇa, classifiable neither as Sat (real), nor as Asat (unreal) like their source, Māyā. They are neither something, yet more than nothing, and are, therefore, termed Mithyā, which means they are not ultimate. They are appearances when contrasted with the higher reality of Brahman.

26. Īśvara is ever conscious of the underlying unity, though he manifests the diversity through his Śakti, Māyā, which gives rise to a sense of other-ness in him. Thus Māyā may be considered to be "the principle of self-consciousness or self-determination. It interpolates a distinction where there is none." Māyā, in this sense, is a mere accessory to Īśvara in bringing this universe into existence out of Himself. Māyā in its āvaraṇa aspect is powerless over Īśvara, for from Him the unity of Being is never concealed. He is, therefore, called Sarvajña (all-knowing). It is only from the Jīva who is prājña (almost ignorant) that Māyā can obscure this unity. Herein lies the great difference between Jīva and Īśvara. Jīva being veiled by Māyā believes in the ultimacy of diversity and subscribes to a fragmentary view of the universe and becomes

* *Vide S. Bhashyam on Br. Sut. I. 4. 3.*

subject to all the evils as a consequence. It identifies itself with its organism with which it is bound up and looks upon the rest of the reality as alien to it. It develops likes and dislikes for a fragment of the reality and is indifferent to the rest. Īśvara, on the other hand, has no special preferences or exclusions (rāga-dveṣa-varjita) and identifies himself with the universe as a whole, not through any confusion between self and not-self, as is the case with Jīva when it identifies itself with its organism, but as a result of unfailing realization of the true nature of both.

27. Jīva, Īśvara and Māyā are not in time or space. Time is phenomenal, and "really represents the relation between spirit and Māyā",* which must, therefore, be pre-existent. Space as the first object created presupposes the principle of causation and, therefore, the conception of time. The distinction of Jīva and Īśvara, and the relation of Māyā and the spirit are also not in time (अनाद्यः)† Let us now examine these last beginningless entities. Let us begin by examining the soul or Ātman which will clarify the distinction as well as the relation.

Section VI.—The Soul or Ātman *per se*—and as it appears through Māyā—Its equipments in phenomenal existence.

28. In Indian Philosophy the soul (or Ātman) assumes greater importance than it usually does in the Western Philosophy. The first subject matter in Indian Philosophy is usually

*M. Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* p. 367.

†It is said by the *Vedantins*—

जीव ईशो विश्वज्ञा चित् तथा जीविशोर्भिदा ।

अविद्या तद्वितीर्योगः षड्व्याकमनादयः ॥

Quoted by Kṛṣṇanandavīrtha in his commentary on *Siddhantaśa-samgraha* Ch. I. ब्रह्मणः कारणत्वविचारे (p. 58 of Benares Ed., p. 72 of Jivananda's Ed.)

the soul. It is the first subject of approach, the medium through which the Philosopher tries to enter into the mysteries of reality. "Know thyself" is the watchword of the Indian Philosopher, for, it is argued that if the soul can be properly known, then everything else becomes automatically known. To the Western Philosopher, the soul does not however assume such extraordinary importance. To him it is just one of the many important subject matters to be tackled. It is seldom if ever taken up as the first subject matter of approach. His method of treatment is more or less objective. He starts with the objects of nature and through a proper appreciation of their characteristics tries to comprehend the nature of reality as a whole. The soul is thus to him one of many subject matters of treatment. To the Indian Philosopher, however, as has been already stated, the soul practically holds the key position. It is looked upon as the most important concentration of reality and it is firmly believed that by understanding its nature we practically understand the nature of reality itself.

29. Śaṅkara made no departure from this accepted position. In dealing with the soul, therefore, he reaffirms the importance of the soul at the outset. In this connection he refers to the passages in the Upaniṣads which practically identify the soul (ātman) with the Brahman.* We might cut short by quoting some of the typical ones. In the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad we get a very good illustration of this method of approach. In the sixth chapter Āruṇi undertakes to teach his son, Śvetaketu, Philosophy. In all his discussions and in all his illustrations he makes the conclusion that the particular subject matter discussed was Brahman and he, Śvetaketu, was also nothing else but Brahman (तत्त्वमसि) and Śvetaketu in his turn was made to say as well as realize that he himself was also Brahman (तद्वास्य विजज्ञाविति विजज्ञाविति). That the individual soul is as important as the Absolute is made explicitly clear in another

*S. Bhashyam on Br. Sut. II. 3. 1.

typical passage of the Upaniṣads which says "if the one is known everything becomes known."* So the general tendency of the Upaniṣads is to ascribe even more than the usual importance attached to the soul in Indian Philosophy. It is a tendency almost to identify the soul with the Brahman and to use them almost as synonymous terms. We might in this connection refer to the remark of Yājñavalkya in the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. When his wife Māltreyī wanted to be taught philosophy he adopted practically the same method of approach. After emphasizing the importance of the soul in the scheme of the universe he said that it was the ātman (soul) which was to be studied, known and assimilated, for, he further added that by knowing its nature everything becomes known.† It is no use multiplying further examples.

30. Śaṅkara not only reaffirms this position but he goes further. He does not simply feel satisfied to say that the soul holds a key position and its knowledge helps us in the knowledge of the universe but he ascribes much more importance to it. It is not a microcosm to him in a macrocosm ; it is the macrocosm itself. It is not merely a true index to the reality proper, according to him, but it is reality itself. He thus identifies the soul *per se* with the Brahman itself. He does not distinguish them or even consider the former to be a part of the latter but he identifies them to be one and the same. Unlike other objects, the soul according to him is not born or destroyed. What is subject to the laws of creation and destruction is not the soul but the sense organs and the body. The destruction that takes place is of the Upādhis (e.g. sense organs etc.) and not of the soul.‡ The immortality of the soul is according to him established by the passages of the Upaniṣads. Thus

*एकस्मिन् विदिते सर्व्वमिदं विदितम् ।

†आत्मा वा चरं द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्त्रव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः etc. Br. A. Up. II. 4. 5. and IV. 5. 6.

‡तथोपाधिप्रलय एवायं नात्मप्रलयः - S. Bhashyam on Br. Sū. II. 3. 17.

Yājñavalkya says in the Brhadāraṇyaka "this soul is indestructible, it has the power to avoid discontinuity."*

31. The greatest obstacle to such a theory of the identity of the soul and the Brahman is the apparent individualization of the soul. The souls appear to be so many different units. If so how can they, working as they do under such limitations, be identified with the one indivisible Absolute? This difficulty is also solved easily by Śaṅkara. He ascribes the appearance of individuality, attributed to the individual soul, to the working of Māyā. It is merely an appearance, it has no intrinsic basis. Ātman-in-itself, Ātman truly as it is, is devoid of the individuality, it is devoid of all division as attributes, in fact it is the same as the Absolute. He further explains that this appearance of individuality is brought about by the sense organs which, so to say, create an artificial surrounding around it.† He draws an analogy in this connection. The space enclosed within an earthen pot is as much a part of the all-pervading space surrounding the earth. The artificial barrier created by the pot makes one think that the space enclosed within it is a separate unit. Far from it, it is indivisibly the all-pervading space and no artificial division can be created as between this and the outer space. Even so the individual soul is indivisibly mixed up with the Absolute, it cannot be separated from it, it cannot even be called a part of it. Śaṅkara completely identifies the two, both are the same. It is the artificial surroundings and barriers created by the sense organs and the body that make it appear as a separate unit of existence. Remove these barriers and you will find each individual soul the same as the Absolute, nothing but the Absolute. The Brahman *per se*, Brahman as it is, appears in the form of individual souls‡

*अविनाशी अरेऽयमात्मानुक्तिविधेः । Br. A. Up. IV. 5. 14.

†बुद्ध्यादुपाधिनिमित्तं तस्य प्रविभाग-प्रतिभानमाकाशस्यैव घटादिसम्बन्धिनिमित्तम् । S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 3. 17.

‡अविकृतस्यैव ब्रह्मणो जीवात्मनावस्थानं ब्रह्मात्मता चेति । S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 3. 17.

32. Since Śaṅkara identifies the individual soul with the Brahman it is not to be wondered that he ascribes to it the essential quality of Brahman itself. He holds that the soul *per se* is essentially consciousness.* It will not be correct to say that consciousness is its attribute. It is the essence of the soul. It is an essential ingredient of the soul, the very stuff of which it is made, so to say. Śaṅkara compares it with the manifestation of heat in fire. Just as all fire is accompanied by the manifestation of heat even so consciousness goes constantly with the soul. It is the indivisible constituent element of the soul.† This characteristic of the soul is an ever present feature, it is never dormant, it never vanishes. In this point it possesses the same characteristic as the Absolute. The power of cognizance of Brahman is never supposed to go, it is a constant presence. It is supposed to exist even when there is no objective presentation to be perceived. The same remarks equally apply to the individual soul. Its power of cognizance never vanishes. It is there even when there is no object to be perceived at all just as light passing through space is not perceived as it is not reflected against any object and yet it exists.‡ The individual soul is constantly conscious.

33. The individual soul, however, as we see and know it, is quite different. It is then as we perceive it, clothed with the limitations of the Upādhis. Here we see it in the plane of dualism, where practically it appears as a member of the many units of the phenomenal world. In the phenomenal order, therefore, it does not and cannot appear as Brahman itself. There it is multitudinous, one of the many millions of units of existences. All the same it is an appearance. Śaṅkara takes good care, therefore, to make it clear that this perception of the individual

*ज्ञो नित्यं च तन्मोक्षमात्मा । S. Bh. on Br. Sūt. II. 3. 18.

†नित्यं च तन्मोक्षरूपत्वमग्नौष्णप्रकाशवदिति गम्यते । S. Bh., on Br. Sūt. II. 3. 18.

‡यथा विद्यदाययस्य प्रकाशस्य प्रकाशाभावादनभिव्यक्तिर्न स्वरूपाभावात् तदवत् । S. Bhashyam on Br. Sūt. II. 3. 18.

soul as a separate unit in the phenomenal plane is after all an appearance, an illusion, and nothing more than that. In reality this appearance does not exist. Its appearance as a separate unit from the Absolute is a mere appearance only and does not in truth exist.*

34. The main characteristic of the individual soul in the phenomenal plane of existence is that it assumes the role of an agent (*kartṛtvam*). It is always active, it is always doing some work. It is a willing active agency. It is always engaged in some sort of voluntary activity.

35. In fact this activity can be reduced to two main types. One kind of activity is controlled by the perceiving faculties which perceive, think and know. There is the other kind of activity controlled by the will which makes the human soul desire things and in the pursuit of such desire adopt a specified course of action. Both kinds of activities presuppose a plane where the dualism of the subject and the object is manifest. Brahman *per se* does not allow of such a division into duality. Therefore, as Ātman proper, the soul cannot be expected to assume this role of agency. This role is possible when we get the dualistic plane of reality where the division of the subject and the object is possible. In this connection, Śaṅkara refers to the famous saying of Yājñavalkya that where there is an appearance of duality there is the perception of the object.† Similarly there is scope for voluntary action only where there is the rise of a desire followed by an impulse of the will for the realization of that desire. Such desires again can arise only in a dualistic plane. In the monistic plane, Brahman *per se* or even the Ātman is not troubled by any desire. It is there in a state of passivity. Śaṅkara, therefore,

*जीव ईश्वरस्याग्री भवितुमर्हति यथाद्येर्विस्तृलिङ्गः । अथ इवाग्रः, न हि निरवयवस्य मुखगोऽग्रः सम्भवति । Sankara Bhashyam, Br. Sut. II. 3. 43.

†S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 3. 40.

tries to bring out that this character of an agent is not essential or even a permanent feature of the *Ātman*.* The manifestation of heat is an essential and permanent feature of fire. The character of agency however does not stand in such relation with the individual soul. It is neither permanent, nor an essential feature. It arises when we exist in the phenomenal plane of existence. It is brought about by the limitations (Upādhis) of the dualistic plane, the limitations of the body and its sense organs, which in their turn create the appearance of detached individual souls hotly and constantly engaged in pursuit of work.

36. The limitations, to which the individual soul (or Jīvātman) as a member of the phenomenal order is subject, are the eleven Prāṇas. These eleven Prāṇas are as follows: They consist of the mind (Antaḥkaraṇa) and the five Karmendriyas and the five Budhīndriyas. In addition to these there is the Mukhya Prāṇa. The Mukhya Prāṇa is the life force itself as it were of the complex of the body and the senses. It is Prāṇa proper. The other prāṇas are what we call the sense organs. The five organs of perception are the organs of sound, touch, sight, taste and smell. The five organs of action are the various actions possible by these organs and are therefore based on it.† There is hardly any need for the multiplication of the number of these sense organs. They are meant to indicate the active and the passive side of the same sense organs. But for that, we can easily treat them for all purposes as five sense organs with the mind (Antaḥkaraṇa) as the sixth.‡ These Prāṇas are not eternally existent, but they are created for each individual soul for discharge of their functions in the plane of phenomenal existence.§ They are believed to be of the size

*उपाधिधर्माध्यासिनैवात्मनः कर्तृत्वं न स्वाभाविकम् । * * * नैव मन्तव्यं स्वाभाविकमेवात्मनः कर्तृत्वमग्रेरिवौष्णमिति । S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 3. 40.

†S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 4. 6.

‡Cf. मनःषष्ठानौन्द्रियाणि Gita XV. 7.

§S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 4. 7-8.

of atoms. They are not assumed to be extended in space, as it is thought that this will help their transmission along with the soul to the future body after death. They are a set of equipments attached to each individual soul. They travel with it from birth to birth to new bodies.* The Mukhya Prāṇa or Prāṇa proper is also created.* It is also of the size of atom and it also accompanies the soul to new births. The Prāṇa proper controls the sense organs (Indriyas). It sustains them. It is the most important of them. For helping it in its discharge of duties as the controlling Prāṇa, it is endowed with special qualities. During sleep the sense organs are dormant but the Prāṇa keeps awake. It controls speech and other actions. It protects the sense organs like the mother who protects her sons.† Though atomic in size it has the special power of becoming all-pervading (Vibhu)‡ This helps it to control the whole body and the other sense organs. The life force (Mukhya Prāṇa) with the eleven sense organs which are called Indriyas and which also include the mind are subordinate to the soul. The Prāṇa occupies the position of a minister to the soul and the Indriyas carry out the orders of the Mukhya Prāṇa.§

37. The individual soul may be subject to one of the following four conditions. These conditions are the waking state, the state of sleep when one dreams, the state of dreamless sleep and the state of swoon. Śaṅkara analyses each of these states and shows how far the character of ātman, *per se* is valid or not in each of these states.¶ Thus in the waking state it is needless to add that the soul is absolutely in the plane of phenomenal order where its character as Brahman itself is obscured to the completest extent. The reasons for this do not at all need any elucidation. In the sleep where we dream, the soul is still working under limitations. Like the waking state it works in a state of dualism with the divisions of the

*S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 4. 8.

†S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 4. 13.

‡S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 4. 9.

§S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 4. 10.

¶Vide K. Bhattacharyya's 'Studies in Vedantism' on this topic.

subject and the object. There is however one very important difference here. The objects of dream consciousness are all creations of the subject alone, they have no objective basis. The result is that all that we dream in sleep is absolutely illusion.* In deep sleep however the dualism of the subject and the object, which is present both in the waking state and in the state of dream, vanishes. Here, therefore, the veil of obscuration, which reduces the soul to a separate unit of the phenomenal order of existence, is lifted. The result is that the soul returns to its original unobscured form where it is indivisibly one with the Absolute. The Upādhis lie dormant there and practically the individual soul becomes merged in the Absolute.† The individual soul there assumes its form *per se* (आत्मैव सुषुप्तिस्थानम्). The state of swoon is in a way different from all these states. In such a state, a man cannot be said to be in the waking state, nor can he be said to be sleeping. He is not capable of the activities of the waking state, nor is he capable of dreaming, for his power of perception then goes. He cannot either be said to be dead, for he retains the capacity of being able to return to life. In substance, however, it makes the nearest approach to dreamless sleep. In both, there is a sense of a memory of complete void accompanied by absence of any experience whatsoever when consciousness returns to it. There is only one slight difference in that dreamless sleep is more or less voluntarily induced while the swoon is a sudden appearance, and it is, so to say, forced on us by external causes. Śaṅkara thinks that in both dreamless sleep and swoon the veil of obscuration created by the limitations of the Upādhis is temporarily lifted and the soul returns to its form *per se*.‡

38. When the soul is brought down to the plane of the

*तद्वान्मायाभाव' स्वप्नदर्शनम् । S. Bh. on Br. Sut. III. 2. 3.

†स्वप्नजागरितयोस्तु उपाधिसम्पत्क'वशात् पररूपापत्तिमिवापेक्ष्य तदुपशमनात् सुषुप्ते स्वरूपापत्तिर्विचक्ष्यते । S. Bh. on Br. Sut. III. 2. 8.

‡तद्व्यादुपाधुपशमात् सुषुप्तवत्सुषुप्तेऽपि कृतस्वसम्पत्तिरेव भवितुमर्हति । S. Bh. on Br. Sut. III. 2. 10.

phenomenal order it is to a certain extent controlled by the Īśvara or God. That is because God is endowed with extraordinary qualities while the individual soul is comparatively a weak thing.* His principal function is to guide and control the individual soul. The control that God thus exercises over the individual soul is not however of an absolute type. It leaves the individual soul to direct its own line of action guided by his inclinations and the fruits of his past actions. God's control over the individual soul is, therefore, of a passive kind. The distinction in endowment of qualities or situation in life should not be ascribed to God's partiality. It is brought about by the fruit of the individual souls' past actions. God guides the individual souls impartially and helps them to shape their own destiny. God's assistance in this respect has been compared to the general beneficial effect that rainfall has to the various plants. Plants draw equally their life-giving sap from the rains but the effect produced on them is different according to the different inclinations of each. The shrubs do not grow sufficiently long but the big trees grow to great heights. Similarly God showers his aid generously and impartially on all individual souls but their destiny is shaped mainly by the fruit of their former actions and their individual inclinations.†

39. It only remains to refer to Śaṅkara's view about the destiny of the soul after death. Śaṅkara more or less accepts the traditional view namely that the soul passes out of the body after death and subsequently takes a new body to reap the fruits of its past actions. With regard to the details of the journey of the disembodied soul after death he practically adopts the view expressed in the Upaniṣads and as a matter of fact quotes their words. It is not necessary, therefore, to deal in detail with this matter. It is not the special feature of Śaṅkara's philosophy nor does it form an important topic in the metaphysical system of Śaṅkara. A passing reference, there-

*S. Bh. on Br. Sū. II. 3. 45.

†S. Bh. on Br. Sū. II. 3. 41-42.

fore, will more than satisfy our present demands. When the soul departs from the body, it is accompanied by its retinue of *Prāṇas* i.e. the eleven sense organs and the *Mukhya Prāṇa*. The evil-doers and the doers of good deeds have different destinies. There is arrangement for punishment of evil-doers. Those who have done good deeds go to the moon and stay there for sometime and after that return to the earth and take a new body through a circuitous process.

Section VII—Saguṇa Brahman as an Ultimate Reality—Jivanmukti and Videhamukti.

40. The conception of *Īśvara* as given above is based on the teachings of the Upaniṣads about Saguṇa Brahman, which, as we have said before, is presented in a twofold aspect—one, as a personal God, or the Lord serving the purpose of a religious Ideal, which, though comparable to Rāmānuja's Ideal, standing as it does for an all-knowing, almighty God—the creator, preserver, and destroyer of the world,—is distinct from it in not being final and in not subscribing to any creed; and the *other*, as a Unity, serving the purpose of a philosophic Ideal standing for the Absolute which explains the universe as it is. There is only one kind of reality viz. of the *Prātibhāsika* (apparent) type, when the universe is viewed from the standpoint of this supreme subject. So it is said, in *Pañcha-daśī* VI. 211, अद्वितीयब्रह्मतत्त्वे स्वप्नोऽयमखिलं जगत्. But this should not be taken to mean that *Īśvara* has any delusion about this world. It only means that its unity with Himself being always realized, all variety as such is known to Him to be a mere abstraction. Śaṅkara, though conceding that the objective world is an appearance to *Īśvara*, has nowhere asserted that it is so to us who have not realized its unity with ourselves. It must be viewed as real until that realization. That such a realization is not only possible for a *Jīva* in this life but ought to be the chiefest end of his life is what Śaṅkara puts forward as his strongest conviction. The meditation upon the identity of the individual self and Brahman in accordance with the

discipline, detailed in chapter II, should be continued until the intuitive knowledge arises and the identity becomes immediate, Aparokṣa. When it does, one becomes liberated even in this life. The testimony of the Upaniṣads becomes verified by one's own living experience and he becomes a *Jīvanmukta*. He continues to live on and to bide his time, having all the experience of pleasure and pain, viewing them with indifference, until he is totally dissociated from his physical accompaniment by death,* because of his actions which have begun to bear fruit and which have given him a life fit for higher experience, just like the potter's wheel which goes on revolving for some time even after the moving force has stopped. His life is then *either* a mystic trance—one samādhi—in which he loses himself in Brahman, *or* a reversion to common life without delusion or attachment—a Vyutthāna—in which he does not necessarily give up all activity—but may continue to act for the benefit of the universe by a sort of enlightened universal love born of the teaching, 'That thou art'. No selfish impulse—no narrow love based on impositions like 'mine' and 'thine' ever actuates him. He realizes his own self in all beings and dislikes none.† The common laws of social morality and rituals lose their meanings for him,‡ yet his morals are on the surest of foundations, he is spontaneously virtuous—"impulse and desire become *one* in him." "In one that has awakened to a knowledge of the self, virtues as kindness and the like imply no conscious effort whatsoever. They are second nature with him,"§ On his leaving the body at the end of his life, his Prāṇa does not travel like those of other Jīvas but merges into Brahman immediately. This is called Videha Mukti.

41. From what we have said above, the conception of Īśvara

* *Vide* S. Bh. on Br. Sut. IV. 1. 15. also Chh. Up. VI. 14. 2 तस्य तावदेव चिरं यावन्न विमोक्षोऽयं सम्पत्स्य इति

† *Vide* Isa Up. 6.

‡ *Vide* S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 3. 48.

§ *Vide* Suresvaracharya's *Naishkarmyasiddhih* IV. 69. Also Vedantasara Sec 93 to 98 pp. 86-91 (J. Vidyasagara's Ed.)

appears to be so parallel to that of the Jīvas that he might be considered as Jīva-viśeṣa or the supreme Jīva. Jīvas and Māyā are not in time like common objects but they are not altogether unrelated to time either, like Viśuddhā Chit (pure consciousness) or the ultimate reality, for their relation implies time. The relation between Saguna Brahman, to use the philosophic term for Īśvara, as the cause, and the universe, as the effect, is, like the relation between the two terms of a Prātibhāsika experience, unique. It is not identity for the effect as such is not the same as the cause ; nor is it difference, for then the two cannot be represented as cause and effect ; nor is it identity-in-difference which, according to Śaṅkara, is a self-contradictory conception. Similarly Saguna Brahman cannot be identical with the Jīvas either individually or collectively, for perfect knowledge (Sarvajñatva) cannot be the same as fragmentary knowledge (Kiñchijñatva), nor an integral cosmic experience the same as a collection of individual experiences. On the other hand, Saguna Brahman cannot be held to be altogether different from the Jīvas. It not only militates against the teachings of the Upaniṣads but destroys that intimate relation between the two which is implied in the description of the whole as a system. The conception of Saguna Brahman involves Adhyāsa and cannot, therefore, be final. The element of reality in Saguna Brahman is the ultimate. This reality is not the mere unity underlying the diversity of the universe, for unity and diversity are both relative terms and both of them are appearances ; and Śaṅkara's ideal is what is beyond them—the noumenal ground (nirviśeṣa-vastu) which can only be negatively described as non-dual (advitīya) and not merely as 'Ekam' (one). Brahman, in this sense, does not suffer change, but gives rise to appearances which do not affect it in the least, yet which depend entirely upon it for their existence.

42. Though serving a practical need, this personal God or Saguna Brāhman is not an essential feature of Śaṅkara's doctrine of Identity, as we have hinted in paragraph 5 above.

That some of Śaṅkara's expressions lend themselves to this interpretation will be evident from the views of some of his noted followers. They hold that as Brahman, acquiring the state of Jīva through his own Avidyā, manifests the manifold universe with all its diversity, it follows that Īśvara too with its attributes of perfect knowledge etc. is an invention of the Jīva like his dream experiences of deities.* In this view, the theistic God is "the noblest creation" of man. No philosopher should fight shy of such views and their implications.

Section VII—Mokṣa—what it means in Śaṅkara's system.

43. We have spoken of Jīvanmukti and Videhamukti in this chapter and of the disciplines in another chapter. It is therefore, necessary that we should examine Śaṅkara's conception of Mokṣa. According to him, Mokṣa is not a state to be newly attained as it is the very nature of the self. It is realizing one's innate nature which happens to be forgotten for the time being. It is like the prince of the story who, having been amongst hunters for a long time, takes to their occupation and forgets that he was a prince, but, on being reminded realizes that he has the Royal blood in him. The celebrated story in the Mahābhārata of Karna, who had known himself as the son of Rādhā, a charioteer's wife, but who realized himself as the son of Kuntī, a Kṣatriya woman, as soon as he was told so by his father (the Sun God), has been referred to by Śaṅkara in his Br. Ār. Up. Bhāṣya (II. 1. 90.) as an illustration. So Sureśvarāchāryya, in his Vārttika, states—

राजसूनोः स्मृतिप्राप्तौ व्याधभावो निवर्त्तते ;

तथैवमात्मानोऽज्ञस्य तत्त्वमस्यादिवाक्यतः ॥

It involves no becoming, for, the prince was always a prince, what he did was to feel that he was one. M. Hiriyanna has given an excellent illustration on the point* by referring to the distinction between the solar and the lunar eclipse. In

* *Vide Siddhantalesasamgrahah* Ch. I. p. 159 (J. Vidyasagara's Ed.)
ईश्वरोऽपि सह सर्वज्ञत्वादिधर्मैः सप्रोपलब्धदेवतावज्जीवकल्पितः ।

the lunar eclipse there is an actual change in the moon, the portion affected being actually enveloped in darkness by the sun's light being cut off by the earth intervening. In the solar eclipse, there is no change in the sun, it remains as it was before, it appears eclipsed because the moon intervening prevents it from being seen. In the former case the passing off of the eclipse signifies a change in the moon—*viz.* its part that was enveloped in darkness becoming lit, while in the latter case, it only means removal of obstacle - the sun remaining as it was all along. So, in the case of Mokṣa in Śaṅkara's system, all that is needed is the removal of Ajñāna which conceals the Truth from us and the discipline prescribed is only to remove the Adhyāsa, so that the Jñāna might manifest itself in its own light destroying the Ajñāna, which is its contrary. Forgetting of one's own identity with Brahman constitutes Saṃsāra. The intuitive knowledge that removes this lapse is the sole means of liberation. So in Pañchadaśī VI. 210, it is stated—

मुक्तिस्तु ब्रह्मतत्त्वस्य ज्ञानादेव न चान्यथा ।

स्वप्नबोधं विना नैव स्वस्वप्नो दीयते यथा ॥

“Liberation can be through (an intuitive) knowledge alone about the Ultimate Truth, and not by any other means, just as one's dream is never sublated except by one's own awakening.” It does not imply that moral discipline and religious acts are valueless. They are necessary as aids to Jñāna, but not to Mokṣa directly ; or, which is the same thing, they are necessary, but not enough for Mokṣa, until they lead to the saving knowledge. The conception of Jīvanmukti is the logical result of such a view of escape from the Saṃsāra. If knowledge is held to be the sole means of release from bondage, there is nothing to prevent it in the psychical or physical accompaniments of Man, the moment such knowledge is gained.

44. Śaṅkara along with the Sūtrakāra concedes a gradual

liberation, in accordance with some passages of the Upaniṣads,* called 'Kramamukti', to a devotee who, combining Vedic rites and disciplines with meditation on the Saṅuṇa Brahman, taking it to be the ultimate reality, being *either* unable to think out a higher reality, *or* feeling himself unequal to realize the higher reality, passes after death on account of his merit by the Northern Path—the Devayāna—to the Brahmaloṇa where he enjoys eternal bliss. Even here Śaṅkara maintains that the devotee in conjunction with the Saṅuṇa Brahman, who has no delusion, acquires the saving knowledge before he is liberated ; and, in case, owing to some lapse, the saving knowledge is not acquired in the Brahmaloṇa, the devotee will have to return to this world in another Kalpa (unfolding of the universe).

45. The Absolute consciousness, however, according to Śaṅkara does not of itself as such negate Nescience. Negation of Nescience is within the sphere of empirical knowledge. The Absolute reigns where there is neither Nescience nor its negation. Yet it is, by its Vṛttijñāna, that the Absolute consciousness negates Nescience, and then stands self-revealed ; by its Svarūpa-jñāna, however, it is the support or substratum (locus) of Avidyā and its products ; just as the sun by its own light enlightens straw and cotton wool, but by its light passed through the sun-gem (or a lens), burns them. Maṇḍana Miśra, who is a person quite different from Sureśvarāchāryya, with whom he has been wrongly identified by many scholars of the present time, as has been clearly pointed out by M. M. Kuppaswami Śāstri in his introduction to his edition of Brahmasiddhiḥ, has propounded, in that book, a doctrine of Advāita which is at variance with

* *Vide Br. Sut. IV. 3. 12., IV. 4. 22.* Śaṅkara quotes the following Sloka from the Kurma Purana I. 12. 269. in support of this theory—

ब्रह्मणा सह ते सर्वे संप्राप्ते प्रतिसञ्चरे ।

परस्थान्ते कृतात्मानः प्रविशन्ति परं पदम् ॥ (*vide* III. 3.32., IV. 3.11.)

vide also Chh. Up. VIII. 15. 1., Br. A. Up. VI. 2. 15. etc. See also Ratnaprabha on S. Bh. on the Br. Sutras above. *cf.* also Anandagiri's comments on them.

Śaṅkara's view on this point. He holds that the negation of the universe (prapañchābhāva) and of Nescience (avidyā-dharmā) "should be recognised as Tāttvika (real), in the sense that they are not annulled by Brahman-realization, that the negation of the world, involved in the conception of its unreality, has a type of existence (Sattā) which is superior to that of the world, and that the recognition of the reality of prapañchābhāva and avidyādharmā does not come into any kind of conflict with the conception of advāita."* This advāita is termed bhāvādvāita—a monism of a positive factor,—which can co-exist with abhāva (absence) without being affected in any way with regard to its oneness. This view, however, is hardly distinguishable from that of the theistic dualists who, to suit their purpose, explain the Upaniṣadic texts of non-duality in an abhāvādvāita sense (of absence of duality of positive factors). As a corollary to this doctrine, Maṇḍana holds Jīva to be the locus (āśraya) and Brahman to be the object (Viśaya) of Nescience—a view which has been grafted into Śaṅkara's system by Vāchaspati and his followers. But Sureśvarāchāryya, a staunch follower of Śaṅkara, very cogently rejects this view, holding :

“आश्रयत्व-विषयत्व-भागिनी सा निर्मागचित्तिरेव केवला ।

पूर्वसिद्धतमसो हि पश्चिमो नाश्रयो भवति नापि गोचरः ॥”

“A pre-existing darkness can neither have, for its support, nor, for its sphere of action, something which has yet to exist ; hence, the pure indivisible consciousness is both the locus and the object.” Maṇḍana's inclination seems rather to be towards regarding Videha Mukti as the true type of Mukti ; and although he does not rule out Jīvanmukti altogether, he thinks that a trace of avidyā still persists in that state. Śaṅkara, however, does not shrink from the logical consequences of the doctrine of Identity between Ātman and Brahman.

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Kūrma-Purāṇam.

A STUDY OF ŚAṆKARA

CHAPTER VI

Other Views on Reality, Truth & Error

Section I—Buddhism—its contrast with Vedānta.

1. It now remains for us to compare Śaṅkara's doctrine with the two unorthodox systems *viz.* Buddhism and Jāinism, which for a considerable time held their sway in India, and have existed for over two milliniums, travelling beyond its borders and counting among its followers excellent types of men—both monks and householders. This comparison is all the more necessary specially with Buddhism, from which Śaṅkara has been supposed, though mistakenly, to draw his inspiration. In fact, if the Vedānta Sūtras were mainly directed against the Prakṛti-pariṇāma theory of the Sāṃkhya whom Śaṅkara has named as "the chief wrestler" (pradhāna-malla) in the field, Śaṅkara's own contribution in the Bhāṣya is towards refuting the Brahma-pariṇāma theory, on the one hand, which grew up amongst a section of Vedāntins, as we have shown before, and, on the other, the extreme subjective Idealism leading on to Nihilism of the Buddhists, as we shall presently show.

2. The point of difference, missed by many scholars, both ancient and modern, between the Buddhistic view of the ultimate reality and the Vedānta is this that while in the former, the ultimate reality is a mere abstraction culminating in Śūnya or negation, in the latter it is a synthesis of Ideas—a reduction to the absolute consciousness which by its peculiar nature holds the whole universe within its fold. It is well, therefore, if at the outset we bear this difference in mind in order to appreciate the charges levelled against Buddhism by the Vedānta, particularly of the Śaṅkara school. The belief

among some modern scholars is that the Mādhyamika Buddhist, while professing the Śūnyavāda, could not really have been a Nihilist, there is something positive as the ultimate behind his negativism, "the word Śūnya applied to it only meaning that it is *as nothing* from the empirical stand-point." Thus E. J. Thomas says, 'It is not the doctrine that all is relative, but that all is relative to an absolute' and again, 'It is the attitude of the mystic who with the experience of the one reality knows that all else is empty and vain.'* But such a conclusion is hardly justifiable from the evidence available not only in Hindu and Jāina philosophical literature but also in the writings of the Mādhyamikas themselves at least in one stage of the history of the doctrine. Chandrakīrti, the Seventh Century commentator on the Kārikās of Nāgārjuna, the chief exponent of the doctrine, for instance, instead of repelling outright the charge of Nihilism brought against it, rests content by pointing out that the doctrine is different from common or vulgar Nihilism.† That it is nihilism is thus conceded, only its negation is stated to be the result of a logical scrutiny of experience and not merely a dogmatic denial. To illustrate the distinction, an analogy is drawn of a witness in a court of law who speaks against a thief from his own knowledge, and of another who, though not uttering an untruth, speaks on account of some prejudice or other, and not from his personal knowledge. The Mādhyamika is like the former and the common Nihilist is like the latter. That Śaṅkara also understood the doctrine to be nihilistic will be evident from his remark on Chh. Up. VI. 2. 1. "सदमावमात्रं हि प्रागुत्पत्तेस्तत् कल्पयन्ति बौद्धाः, न तु सत्प्रतिद्वन्द्वं वस्तुन्तरम् इच्छन्ति" "The Buddhists imagine a mere absence of Being as the truth before origination, and never wish to posit something else (real) corresponding to the Being." So also in the commentary on the Jāina work Pramāṇa-naya-

*History of Buddhist Thought pp. 217 and 225 ; *vide* also Sir S. Radhakrishnan's Indian Philosophy, Vol. I. pp. 662-666.

†Commentary (Prasannapada) on Nagarjunas Karika XVIII. 7.

tattvālaṃkāra I. 15, it is asserted that “सर्वशून्यतैव परं तत्तुम्” “All-voidness is the ultimate Truth” according to the Buddhists. T. I. Stcherbatsky translates “Śūnyatā” in Chandrakīrti’s Prasannapadā (ch. 1 and 25) by “relativity” and remarks,* “We use the term ‘relative’ to express the fact that a thing can be identified only by mentioning its relation to something else, and becomes meaningless without these relations.” D. T. Suzuki† says, the doctrine “simply means conditionality or transitoriness of all phenomenal existences.” Thus modern Buddhologists too find no suggestion of the positive side in the doctrine. That it was held to be negative by all Sanskrit philosophers would appear from their polemics against it. Later day Buddhism, it goes without saying, accepted with slight modifications many of the tenets of the Vedānta, and this has led to a confusing and even contradictory mass of literature which accounts for the error of holding without much critical consideration that Śaṅkara’s view is “hidden Buddhism.” The doctrine of absolute Nihilism or flux did not find favour with any of the schools of Vedānta, because, according to them, nothing can be sublated without something being posited,—nothing can be proved false if nothing is taken as true,—there can be no flux unless there is something stable. A flux can only be perceived as flux when there is an immutable substratum. Negation of everything is inconceivable without implying an *Abadhi* or positive ground.

3. It is not clear from the Brahmasūtras dealing with the refutation of Buddhism,‡ how many schools of Buddhists were extant at the time of the Sūtras and whether the later Mahāyāna doctrines as propounded by Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva, or Asaṅga and Vasubandhu were existing in any form during these periods. It is evident, however, that the schools

*The conception of Buddhist Nirvana p. 42. (1927).

†Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism (1907).

‡II. 2. 18—32.

had not been as clearly defined at that time as they were at the time of the Bhāṣyakāras, although many of the peculiar logical and metaphysical positions maintained by the Buddhists had developed. There has, therefore, been confusion regarding the assignment of the Sūtras by the commentators to the three main schools of Buddhists recognized by all of them, *viz.* (1) The Sarvāstitvavādins or the realists, (2) the Vijñānamātrāstitvavādins or the subjective idealists and (3) the Sarvasūnyatvavādins or the Nihilists. Śaṅkara, in common with Bhāskara and Vallabha, dismisses the Sūnyavāda with a mere mention, while Rāmānuja and others bring it under the last Sūtra. Madhvāchāryya distributes the Sūtras in conformity with the historical development of the schools, though with very little cogency, first against Bāhyārthavāda (the same as Sarvāstitvavāda), Sūtras 18 to 25 ; secondly against the Sūnyavāda, Sūtras 26 to 29 ; and lastly against the Vijñānamātravāda, Sūtras 30 to 32. That the cryptic mnemonic Sūtras may be stretched to conform to Madhva's interpretation is due to the fact that all schools of Buddhism agree on several essential points and hence many of the arguments against one of them would apply to the others indiscriminately. The Sūtras have, however, the look of one connected whole, as pointed out by Dr. Belvalkar, with the last Sūtra (No. 32) as "the finale of the attack." There is a sort of logical order in taking up the successive positions of the Buddhists for refutation in the Sūtras, and Śaṅkara has followed this sequence in his Bhāṣya. Śaṅkara, it may be noticed, has dealt with the Sarvāstitvavādins at much greater length than with the other two schools of Buddhists. There were Sarvāstitvavādins who maintained that momentariness should be ascribed to the phases of things and not to the things themselves,—who maintained that "the cause never perishes but only changes its name when it becomes an effect having changed its state."* This view brings the doctrine very close to that of Śaṅkara and might explain the

**vide* Dr. Belvalkar's notes on Brahmasutra II. 2. 25.

anxiety he displays to bring out clearly the difference between the two systems. But we cannot be certain whether Śaṅkara was conversant with this view, as in explaining the Brahma-sūtras he has never referred to it. Even if he was, he might ignore it, as it must have been a later development than the Sūtras and could not have been referred to in them. In any case, in view of the importance attached to the Sarvāstitvavādins by Śaṅkara, we take up their theory first.

Section II—The Sarvāstitvavādins or Realists and
their subdivisions. Their doctrines
enunciated and criticised.

4. The Sarvāstitvavādins with their subdivisions of Sāutrāntikas and Vāibhāṣikas belong to what is known as 'Hīnayāna' or 'the humbler conveyance', the historically primitive school of Buddhism with its sacred Pāli canon, the 'Tipitaka' (or the three baskets) drawn up years after the death of Buddha in a council of elders or Sthaviras. This school came to develop within it, at an early period, eighteen smaller sub-schools or sects with practically no radical difference of opinion on essential points. This is the orthodox school of Buddhism that arose in revolt against the Vedic teachings and taught men that the true path of Salvation need not be beyond the reach of ordinary men provided they lead a life of self-discipline and supra-mundane contemplation. This school did not transform Buddha into a divinity and presumably had no elaborate ceremonials like the other school—the Mahāyāna or the 'Higher conveyance.' There was, however, a gradual transition from the one to the other ; for, we hear of a Śūnyavāda by Hari-varman of the Hīnayāna school, which might be taken as a stage between Hīnayānism and Mahāyānism. The Hīnayāna school continued in India from about 200 B. C. up to the fifth century A. D. and the Mahāyāna phase began from about 100 A. D. and was vigorous in Northern India up to the eighth century A. D. There was, therefore, a considerable fusion between the two schools, and even with Hinduism—the more

irreconcilable of the former driving more and more Southwards to Ceylon, Burma and Siam, and of the latter Northwards to China, Thibet and Japan. The Sāutrāntikas were so called because they did not recognize the authenticity of the Abhidhamma Pitaka (the third Pitaka) alleging that Buddha had taught independent Sūtras on the subject, while the Vāibhaṣikas not only recognized all the three Pitakas but claimed authoritativeness for a Vibhāṣā or commentary on the Abhidhamma, which they compiled. The Sāutrāntikas seem to be a later phase of the Hīnayāna, in as much as they recognized a large number of Buddhas and admitted the doctrine of Dhammakāya belonging to each of them.

5. The Sarvāstivādin postulate two classes of entities—both of which are real—*viz.* the external and the internal. The external includes the elements and the elementals—known as Dharmas ; and the internal includes the mind and the mentals—known as Skandhas. The Dharmas again are mostly complex (Saṃskṛta) and liable to production and dissolution, except three negative Dharmas which are recognized to be simple (Asaṃskṛta)—*viz.* the Ākāśa (space) and Pratisaṅkhyā Nirodha (conative sublation) and Apratisaṅkhyā Nirodha (non-conative or involuntary sublation), which are non-substantial and indescribable. The chitta (mind) and the chāittas (mentals) have an external or objective existence as *Dharmas*, while the senses and the sense-objects are postulated to have an internal or subjective existence. The four elements—earth, air, water and fire, are the products of the minutest forms of 'Rūpa' (matter) or Paramāṇus which are indivisible, unanalysable, and imperceptible to the senses. A group of six Paramāṇus around a central one forms the prime unit, Anu, which can just come within the range of the senses. The Paramāṇus are by their nature possessed of Sneha (adhesive), Īraṇa (propelling) Uṣṇa (heating) and Khara (resisting) qualities. The presence of these qualities causes the Paramāṇus to conglomerate into *Anus* and larger aggregates, and eventually into the four elements,

which, as they possess one of the four inherent qualities of the constituent *Paramāṇus* in a prominent degree, are supposed to have only that quality active, the others lying dormant in each particular case. As in the outer world, so in the inner world there are the five aggregates of internal cognitions—the *Rūpa-skandha*, the *Vijñānaskandha*, the *Vedanāskandha*, the *Samjñāskandha* and the *Samskāraskandha*. Of these, *Rūpaskandha* is the aggregate of the senses with their objects as presented to the subject ; the *Vijñānaskandha* is the consciousness of the knowing subject as the knower ; the *Vedanāskandha* is the aggregate of the pleasure-pain sensations consequent on the working of the mind on the sense presentations ; the *Samjñāskandha* is the aggregate of the specific concepts or ideas formed by the mind on the sense presentations ; and lastly the *Samskāraskandha* is the aggregate of impressions produced by the mental images that lead to sufferings from attraction, repulsion, fear, vanity, excitement, dullness etc., and to certain innate ethical predispositions. Presumably these aggregates are the products of units of mindstuff of uniform disposition, as the external aggregates are those of the *Paramāṇus*, giving rise to the compound mental phenomena in the world with emphasis on one of the original common dispositions in each case, while the other dispositions remain dormant, just as in the case of the external physical phenomena. But who ordains in both the external and internal aggregates, that one disposition should prevail and the others should lie dormant ? Taking the *Paramāṇus* to be active but admittedly devoid of intelligence, there can be no unfailing uniformity in their movements and functions. Without an intelligent regulator it is inconceivable that certain *Paramāṇus* should agree to subordinate the other three dispositions to the prevailing disposition of, say, *kharatva* (hardness) to produce the earth and its products. Similarly the regularity in sequence of the mental ideas and impressions as well as of the feelings and emotions, no less marked than in the physical phenomena, is inexplicable without a regulating intelligence. It is idle to assert that the *chitta* or mind regu-

lates these processes, for the *chitta* itself is an aggregate, and some regulating principle prior to it must be found for the aggregation. The *chitta* functions only on the data of the senses and the senses function in the body, all of which have yet to exist. Again, the *summum bonum* of the Buddhists *viz.* Nirvāṇa is attainable only on the extirpation of all *Kleśas* or passions following the cessation of Pravṛtti or activity. Even if this extirpation is taken to be a change in the opposite or nobler direction under the influence of knowledge, hate translating itself into love and so on, the reversal can only be brought about by a deliberate and intelligent exercise of the Will. In any case Pravṛtti or activity must depend on a permanent conscious subject, for if Pravṛtti functions independently it can never cease, having no motive to do so. The Buddhists argue that such a conscious subject does not exist at all, for we are never conscious of any Ātman or self as a thing-in-itself whenever we look within us, but we only notice some psychic phenomena happening serially. What gives them a stamp of individuality is Āśaya or psychic continuum (a term obsolete in later Buddhism), by which is probably meant a seeming extension of a psychic phenomenon like the light of a light-particle in a flame which gives to the flame an apparent unity. Now, if this continuum is co-extensive with two or more individual psychic experiences it must be distinct from each one of the series and can never be momentary like any of them. Moreover, in order to be able to conglomerate, it must be endowed with a Will which it must exercise with intelligence. If these are conceded, then according to Śāṅkara, it is no longer a continuum, but an eternal underlying principle which is the same as the Ātman of the Vedāntins. Moreover, the assumption that this Āśaya or reflective consciousness as a psychic continuum is momentary makes it incapable of starting any operation, for an operation presupposes an operator as a cause, who is also the *locus in quo* of the operation ; and hence, existing before and at the same moment with the operation, the operator cannot be momentary. A momentary Āśaya, therefore, does not

explain any activity essential for the aggregation. The hypothesis, in consequence, is of no value in explaining all mundane existence depending on aggregation.

Section III—Buddhist doctrine of causation—
Transmigration and Karman—and the
doctrine of momentariness.

6. The doctrine of causation of the Buddhists known as the *Pratītyasamutpāda* (Pāli—*Paṭichhasamuppāda*) or origination by an interdependent collocation of causes must necessarily ignore an intelligent *Adhiṣṭhātā* (director). The Buddhists divide the causes into two classes—(1) *Hetus* or direct causes which immediately give rise to the effect and (2) *Pratyayas*, or contributory causes or conditions, without any of which, it is impossible for the *Hetu* to give rise to the effect. The realists again classify these into external (*Bāhya*) and internal (*Ādhyātmika*). The idealists recognize the internal class only.* The Buddhists seem to hold that when, for a given effect, a certain number of specific causes and conditions might be assigned and for these latter certain other specific causes and conditions which brought them into operation to produce the joint result, and so on, and when, in case of any aberration from the normal effect, reasons might be adduced for the excess or deficiency by showing what other causes, beyond the ordinary, had been functioning or had ceased to function, there is no need of positing some Wise Intelligence detached from the world to direct the operations. That there is an inherent weakness in this argument is obvious, for without intelligent direction there can be no order or uniformity in the universe which would enable us to deduce the Laws of Nature. The external class of direct causes is illustrated in the *Bhāmatī* as follows—“From the seed the sprout—from the sprout the leaf—from the leaf the trunk—from the trunk the stem—from the stem the sheath—from the sheath the awn—from the awn the

* *Vide* भाष्यतौ on S. Bh. II. 2. 19.

flower—from the flower the fruit," and thus the series goes in a wheel without the former *knowingly* causing the latter in the series and without there being any intelligent director. The contributory causes are the six Dhātus or elemental dispositions—*viz.* the earth, water, fire, air, ākāśa and the season. These also harden melt, ripen, scatter, unfold and develop the seed without any conscious effort. The internal class of direct causes is a series of twelve internal principles known as the twelve Nidānas. These are (1) Avidyā or ignorance, (2) Saṃskāra or tendency, (3) Vijñāna or dawning consciousness, (4) Nāmarūpa or name and form, (5) Ṣaḍāyatana or six sense-fields, (6) Sparśa or contact, (7) Vedanā or feeling, (8) Trīṣṇā (Tānhā) or craving, (9) Upādāna or rooted ideas, (10) Bhāva or disposition or character ripe for fruit, (11) Jāti or birth, and (12) Jarā-maraṇa-śoka-paridevanā-duḥkha-durmanastā, or decay, death, bereavement, lamentation, sorrow and despair. These follow one another in this order inevitably in an endless succession, the last composite term of the series giving rise again to the first, so that the series goes round and round in a wheel till the root cause, Avidyā, is snapped asunder by following the teaching of the Lord Buddha. But even if it be conceded that each term of this series can produce the next term, can the whole series in a fixed sequence come into existence without the intervention of something outside the series? Nor is it explicable how a number of *Pratyayas* can co-operate simultaneously in originating an effect in conjunction with the *Hetus*, unless a permanent sentient being—as an experiencer or as a controller, brings about their conglomeration. This cannot be the result of undesigned accident, for in that case production of the joint result would not *necessarily* follow. It cannot be said that the series necessarily imply the conglomeration—in the sense that, because the series cannot have any existential character without conglomeration, they inevitably postulate it. What then is the inducement—the *Nimitta*—for this conglomeration? Śaṅkara points out that in examining the Vāiśeṣika philosophy, no assignable inducement could be found for the

aggregation of atoms, which are eternally existing in that philosophy, and in spite of the admission of permanent experiencing souls who could serve as the substratum of the *Adṛṣṭa* or Karmaphala,—how much less possible must it then be for the Buddhists to find it, when their atoms are momentary phenomena having no souls to come in contact with, and assuming no such kind of relation of substratum and dependents, as is admitted by the others, between the self and the atoms. The series cannot, by themselves, be the *motive* behind the conglomeration, when they have acquired their existential character through it. Lastly, it would be wrong to imagine that ready-made conglomerations exist in this beginningless *Samsāra* and that the series of *avidyā* etc., depend on them; for, then incongruities will arise, in holding either that a new conglomeration arising out of an earlier conglomeration will be invariably similar, or that it may or may not be so without any definite rule in the matter. In the former case it will militate against the teachings of Buddhists regarding rebirths of men as Gods or lower animals or denizens of hell; and in the second case, men could become elephants in one moment and Gods in the next and men once more even at the one and the same life. Besides, as there is no permanent experiencing agent in any of the Buddhistic systems, all experiences can only be for their own sake, and cannot be sought for by anybody else. Nor can there be any one seeking salvation which must also similarly be for its own sake. For, a seeker of either will have to last up to the moment of experience or salvation, thus going against the doctrine of momentariness.*

7. Our memory and recognition prove the utter hopelessness of the doctrine of momentariness, so fondly clung to by all the sects of Buddhists. For remembrance and recognition must belong to the same subject as had the original perception, thus giving an enduring character to the subject beyond

* *Vide Br. Sut. II. 2. 18-19. S. Bh.*

one moment. The cognition is always of the form—'I perceived this event before and I am remembering it now' or "I saw this before and I am seeing it again." It is only when one and the same person is the agent of the perception and the memory or the recognition, that the judgment can be in this form. The seeing and the remembering—or the seeing and the recognizing evidently belong to the same agent.* The agent also recognizes himself as the agent of the different experiences. It will not do to say that this arises out of similarity. For, similarity implies two factors—(1) 'This' of the present moment which is similar to (2) 'that' of the past moment ; and unless there is someone to comprehend these two factors persisting in two different moments, who is there to perceive the similarity ? Besides, we are never aware of any similarity in the judgment above but are always aware of an identity ; and although we may sometimes be in doubt about the identity of the outside object involved in the judgment, no one ever doubts the identity of the perceiver. The Vedāntist again never countenances the doctrine of entity arising out of non-entity and this is an additional argument why the doctrine of extreme momentariness as propounded by the Buddhists could find no favour with them ;† for, to say that a non-existent prior moment can cast a reflection on a posterior moment would be virtually admitting origin of entity out of non-entity.

8. All classes of Buddhists accept the doctrine of Karman and of transmigration, or rather flux in a circle, although they never posit any permanent substance persisting throughout time like the soul.‡ This is, however, no more

* *Vide Br. A. Bh. Varttika by Suresvaracharyya, I. 2. Sl. 61-73.*

“अधिकले च भावानां प्रत्यभिज्ञायसम्भवः ।

न ह्यन्यदृष्टं वस्तुन्यैः प्रत्यभिज्ञायते कचित् ॥ etc.

† *vide S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 2. 25-26.*

‡ *vide चतुःशतकम् Aryadeva Ch. X.*

inconsistent than, or rather it is quite in keeping with, the position taken up by the Buddhists in expounding action without an abiding agent. Indeed, in this view, there is not only rebirth after death but rebirth at every moment ; for, at every moment, a new entity carries on the action of the previous moment, so that there is continuity but no persistence. According to Rhys Davids, it is character in Buddhism that transmigrates and not any soul or self. As in life, so after death, a man's character lives after him and gives rise to a being who, though different in form, is entirely influenced by it. And this process goes on until this flux of character, which constitutes the personality, comes to an end by overcoming the 'thirst' for being. Karman is an impersonal law, according to the Buddhists, in the sphere of morality working according to its nature and by itself. They, therefore, speak of the anterior births of the Buddha in their Jātaka stories and have developed the doctrine of Bodhisattvas—the would-be Buddhas in a subsequent life. These assumptions, however, are meaningless unless an identical personality endures through successive lives and experiences the fruits of his own karman. The Āśaya or Ālayavijñānam which is changing every moment cannot serve the purpose of this enduring personality ; for, if, for the purpose of these experiences, some features of the preceding Āśayas cling to the succeeding ones to form a storehouse of subliminal impressions, it is practically to concede the existence of something that endures for more than one '*Kṣaṇa*'. On the basis of extreme momentariness admitted by all sects of Buddhists, one term of the Avidyā series cannot become the originator of the next term. With the assumption that when a subsequent moment is originated the antecedent moment becomes automatically sublated, no relation of cause and effect between the two can be substantiated, because the antecedent moment being non-existent cannot be the cause of the subsequent moment. The antecedent moment, that has assumed its full form of existence within that moment, cannot extend its activity beyond that moment to create the subsequent moment

without coming into relation with the second moment, when it has been assumed to have ceased to exist. Nor can it be contended that a causal relation is possible even without the effect being imbued with the characteristic of the cause ; for, then anything can be the cause of anything else. When a thing in the series comes into existence as an effect (or *kārya*) of a thing preceding and becomes the cause (or *kāraṇa*) of a thing succeeding, its phases as *kārya* and *kāraṇa* are quite distinct, the one must be transformed into the other. This process in the life of a thing implies duration for at least three moments : *viz.* the moment of its origination as *kārya* ; that of its transformation into the *kāraṇa* ; and lastly that of its causing, with its extinction, the origination of the next member of the series ;—a position admitted by the *Vaiśeṣikas* but running counter to the Buddhist tenet. Both *Bādarāyaṇa* and *Śaṅkara* do not seem to have heard of *Sarvāstitvavādin*s, who accept the doctrine of *Parināmīnityatā* or noumenal permanence and assert that the substratum of everything is eternal and permanent and what changes every moment is the phase of the thing. This doctrine evidently departs from the original teaching of the Buddha which has been more faithfully preserved by the two *Mahāyāna* schools. The origination and sublation of an object cannot both be the essence of an object at the same moment, nor can they be quite distinct from it, for in that case the object, not being liable to origination or sublation, becomes a permanent entity. If only perception and non-perception is meant by the terms origination and sublation in respect of an object, they, being attributes of the subject and not of the object, cannot affect the object which thereby must be held to be eternal. Again, as we have noticed in paragraph 6, any intellectual or emotional event, according to the Buddhists, calls for the simultaneous co-operation of a number of factors—called the *Pratyayas*. These are of four distinct kinds—(1) *Ālambana-pratyaya* or the object, (2) *Samanantara-pratyaya* or the immediately preceding experience, (3) *Adhipati-pratyaya* or the directing conditions and (4) the *Sahakāri-*

pratyaya or the contributory conditions. As for instance, in the apprehension of the blue as a concept, the blue object is the Ālambana-pratyaya ; and in the stream of momentary experiences each previous experience which is said to be the cause of the succeeding experience is the Samanantara-pratyaya (termed '*manas*') ; the Adhipati-pratyaya is the eyes ; and the Sahakāri-pratyaya is the light. Over and above these, the past experiences as a Saṃskāra (subliminal composite impression) must enter into the constitution of the cognition. If it were urged, therefore, that the moment previously extinct (*niruddha*) need not exist at the moment of the cognition, the explanation of the phenomena of our mental and emotional life becomes well-nigh impossible by means of the four-fold pratyayas.

Section IV—The Asaṃskṛta Dharmas.

9. Let us now examine the Asaṃskṛta (simple) Dharmas which are said to be permanent, non-substantial, negative and indescribable, and unlike the Saṃskṛta (complex) Dharmas which alone are transitory. Let us first consider the two kinds of sublations—(1) conative and (2) non-conative or involuntary. A sublation of things preceded by a deliberate act of the mind is termed conative, and the reverse is non-conative or involuntary. None of these sublations can stand the test of reason. They as permanent entities must belong to the stream of existences as a whole or to each single existence separately. In the former case, as the individual constituents of the stream form an uninterrupted succession of causes and effects, it is impossible to stop the stream as a whole for this purpose of the sublation. In the second case, substantial individual existences can never be overtaken by unsubstantial sublation leaving no vestige behind them, since by the very force of recognition, an existential entity, in all its states, is invariably found to maintain its generic features uninterrupted. And even where the recognition is not manifestly present, such absence of interruption might be inferred from observed facts in well-ascertained cases.

The conative sublation again, (*prāṭisamkhyā nirodha*), which is meant to effect the cessation of the *Avidyā* series must be supposed to be outside the series of cause and effect. Otherwise it cannot destroy the series. Being outside the series, it necessarily is causeless and non-causing. To suppose that it proceeds from right knowledge with all its accompaniments would run counter to that position. To hold, on the other hand, that it is spontaneous would make all instructions for "the noble eightfold path" superfluous.*

10. The third *Asaṃskṛta* Dharma is the *Ākāśa* (or space) which has been defined as mere absence of limitation. *Śaṅkara* denies that it can be unsubstantial, as there is a perception of reality just as in the case of the two *nirodhas*. Its fundamental reality may also be inferred from the sensation of sound. It may be noted that the Indian philosophers conceived of five kinds of elements corresponding to the five sense organs, giving rise to the five sensations of smell, taste, colour, touch and sound. The solid element, of which *Kṣiti* or the earth is the type, gives us the sensation of smell ; the liquid element, of which *Ap* or water is the type, gives us the sensation of taste ; the luminous element, of which *Tejas* or fire is the type, gives us the sensation of colour and form ; the tactile element, of which *Vāyu* or the wind is the type, gives us the sensation of touch ; and the sound element, of which *Ākāśa* or the space—the subtlest of all elements—is the type, gives us the sensation of sound. All objects of our experience are compounds of these five elements in varying proportions. According to *Śaṅkara*, therefore, *Ākāśa* is as much real and substantial as the other four elements. It cannot be a mere negation—an absence of limitation, as maintained by the Buddhists. Any absence or negation is destroyed by one positive instance against it. Absence of a white crow can no longer exist as soon as one white crow is found. Similarly, absence of limita-

*S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 2. 20-23.

tion is at once destroyed as soon as there is one limitation. Thus, one crow flying in the Ākāśa and giving it a limitation destroys the Ākāśa which is nothing but an absence of limitation. Hence there would be no longer any Ākāśa for another crow to fly in. To contend that the second crow would fly in another part of the Ākāśa would be to assign to Ākāśa a reality capable of division into parts—an attribute of a positive substance. Again, it is self-contradictory to say that the three Asaṃskṛta Dharmas are indescribable and to assert in the same breath that they are eternal and unreal. Again, what is the meaning of calling an unreal thing either as eternal or as non-eternal? Can the attributes of a substance be affirmed or denied of what is unsubstantial?*

Section V---The Vijñānamātrāstitvavādins.

11. After dealing with the Sarvāstitvavādins, Śaṅkara turns his attention towards the Vijñānamātrāstitvavādins (or Yogāchāras), according to whom, the category of Vijñāna is the sole reality belonging to the realm of *relative* knowledge. They deny reality not only to all Dharmas but also to the other four Skandhas even in the domain of relative knowledge. In the ultimate analysis, however, they would hold by the doctrine of Śūnyatā†—a mere 'suchness' (Tathatā) devoid of any characteristics and free from the distinction of subject, object and knowledge in common with the Sarva-sūnya-vādins. Extreme Śūnyavāda denies reality to all experiences and objects, and reaches its culmination in the doctrine of the "Eight No's" referred to in the introductory salutation of Nāgārjuna in his Madhyamaka Śāstra—e.g. (1) No sublation, (2) no origination, (3) no destruction, (4) no permanence, (5) no oneness, (6) no plurality, (7) no ingress and (8) no egress. But while this latter school starts from the stand-point of logic and shows the impossibility of making any statements free from contradictions,

*S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 2. 24.

†Vide Asanga I. 15.

the Vijñānamātra school assumes the psychological analysis of earlier Buddhism into the Skandhas, sense-organs, and the senses, and formulates its doctrine on this psychological basis. According to Vijñānavāda, therefore, there are six particular kinds of consciousness or awareness corresponding to the five sense-organs and the *Manas* (mind). Besides these, there is a seventh, distinguished as *Manas per se*, which is said to be self-consciousness. Each of the six Vijñānas acts through only one sense, but there is a faculty which distinguishes and compares the data of each sense, and forms a common link as it were between the different consciousnesses. While the mind-consciousness is what remembers, judges, compares, imagines and wills, *Manas per se* is the deeply seated ego-consciousness which clings, out of ignorance, to the conception of an ego and the reality of an external world. Behind all this, there is an ultimate reality—real beyond what can be asserted of anything coming within the range of experience—called *Chitta* or mind without any differentiation—which is the eighth consciousness—or the store-consciousness (*Ālayavijñāna*). There are three kinds of self-existence (*Svabhāva*)—(1) *Parikalpita*, which is the nature of *Nāma* (name) and *Nimitta* (mark), themselves entirely unreal, but giving a wrongly imagined construction of existence which attributes reality to unrealities ; (2) *Paratantra*, which is the nature of the conditionally true (*Vikalpa*) *i. e.* things that are true only in a relative sense—their self-existence depending on another ; and (3) *Pariniṣpanna* (or the perfected existence) which is the nature of *Samyagjñāna* (right knowledge) *i. e.* knowledge free from names, marks and conditions, knowledge of *suchness* (*Tathatā*), or absolute reality. The *Vāsanās* or super-sensuous remnants of action, like “perfumes” of things no longer existent, live latently in the store-consciousness* as seeds (*Bījas*) and always in time bear fruit. The store-consciousness is thus differentiated by the *Vāsanās* and when it evolves, it unfolds *Sparsa* (touch), *manaskāra* (mental activity), *Vedanā* (feeling), *Samjñā* (perception) and *Chetanā* (active

* *Vide* D. T. Suzuki's *Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra*, p. 178.

consciousness). These are the pure subjective elements only implying no external counterparts of the Skandha theory of the realists which had to be modified to fit in with the Vijñāna alone theory. Thus, the heresy of externality implied in Rūpaskandha is obliterated by admitting only the subjective element of touch. Manaskāra or the Idea (which includes the subjective aspect of all impressions) replaces the Saṃskāras (impressions). So in Vedanā and Saṃjñā, the external element is denied. Chetanā, meaning pure consciousness, replaces the Vijñānaskandha which is the consciousness of the subject as the knower of an object, thus implying an external element. The term Vijñāna has been avoided here presumably because it has been used in a special sense in the system. This unfolding of the seeds is followed first by the unfolding of the seventh consciousness, the *Manas*, accompanied by the heresy of the self and then by the perception of the sixfold object—colour, sound, taste, smell, touch and ideas. The idea of a self, consisting of the Skandhas, thus becomes concrete. Thence follow the Saṃskāras, the impressions or modes of sense and thought and deed of the individual. In the Yogāchāra philosophy systematized by the brothers, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, the store-consciousness has more or less an individual characteristic throughout. The eighth consciousness of one person does not develop into the Bījas of another. This is because the exposition deals initially with phenomena and explains them as they appear in each individual. Yet the Yogāchāras ignore the individualizing factor and conclude that nothing but consciousness exists ; and the true nature of phenomena is the Tathatā or suchness. For Nāgārjuna, the exponent of Sarvaśūnyavāda, also it is suchness, but he gives no positive explanation of the relation between phenomena and the Absolute. To the Yogāchāras, the relation is neither of difference nor of non-difference. As not different from the Absolute, the store-consciousness is entirely universal and undifferentiated, and the contradiction involved in the positive explanation is to be surmounted, as in Vedānta, by the Yoga method. The Yogāchāras, like the

Mādhymikas, affirm the non-selfness (nāīrātmya) of individuals as well as of things. The two beliefs—the belief in the real existence of self (ātman) and of things (dharma)—according to them, are hindrances to right knowledge.

12. Now, to compare this view with that of Śaṅkara, it is evident that Śaṅkara's idealism differs as much from this extreme form of subjective idealism of the Buddhists as does the idealism of Schelling or of Hegel from that of Berkeley. Śaṅkara, unlike the Vijñānamātravādins, maintains that in the phenomenal world external objects do exist because we perceive them as such. Everybody apperceives a column or a wall, not as a mere apperception, but as an object of apperception. He holds that whatever we apperceive through one of our instruments of knowledge (pramāṇa) is real, and whatever cannot be so apperceived is not real. The subject is fundamentally distinct from the object and will always remain so in all cognitions, until they merge into the Absolute which is beyond the realm of subject-object relation. That we apperceive the perception and the object at the same time is because they are related as cause and effect, and not because they are identical.* Moreover, in our cognitions of a jar as such and in that of a cloth as such it is the presentations (jarness and clothness) which differ and not the perceptive cognition, just as in the expressions 'a white cow' and 'a black cow', it is the attributes of whiteness and blackness that differ, and not the generic nature of a cow. The two presentations establish their distinctions from the perceptive cognition which is the subject to which the presentations refer, and the perceptive cognition also establishes its own distinction as the subject from the two presentations which are the objects of its cognition. Accordingly the object and its Vijñāna, so far as it is subjective, must be regarded as distinct. Again, in the perceptive and memory cognition of a jar, the jar does

*Bhamati quotes Dharmakīrti to expose the view for refutation—
'सहीपलभनियमाद्, अमेदी नीलतद्विधोः।' etc. on Br. Sut. II. 2. 28.

not differ, but its perceptive and memory cognitions, of which the jar is a mark or *viśeṣaṇa* (attribute), differ, just as in smell and taste of milk, the difference is not in the mark itself *viz* milk but in what are marked (*viśeṣyas*) *viz* smell and taste. This also proves the distinctness of the object from its cognitions as the former does not change with the change of the latter.

13. Again, against the position of the *Vijñānamātravādins*, which they hold in common with other schools, in order to maintain a sort of continuity or individuality in a man's consciousness not only in this life but throughout a transmigratory period *viz.* that each previous momentary consciousness, though extinct, transmits somehow to the next consciousness a subliminal impression, forming in a given life with a succession of these '*Vāsanās*' or remnants like 'perfumes', an individual group known as *Ālaya-vijñāna* or store-consciousness, all the objections urged by the *Vedāntins* in paras 7 and 8 above apply with equal force ; for, there being no *Ātman*—no abiding perceiver as the substratum of the momentary conscious phases, there can be no mutual relation of comprehended (*grāhya*) and comprehender (*grāhaka*). To posit a causal relation between the *Vijñāna* of a previous moment and that of a succeeding moment involves the need of someone or something as an abiding medium beyond, and independent of, the momentary series of consciousness ; and for this purpose to bring in the *Ālaya-vijñāna* and to differentiate it from the *Pravṛttivijñāna*, asserting at the same time the momentariness of all *Vijñānas* lead us on to an inconsistency which is hardly reconcilable. *Dinnāga*, the pupil of *Vasubandhu*, one of the founders of the school, and *Dharmakīrti*, the pupil of *Īśvarasena*, *Dinnaga's* own pupil, speak of a *common* factor (सामान्यम्) in all *Vijñānas* (अनेकानुगतम्) as knowledge (ज्ञानं बोधरूपम्), and another *special* characteristic in each *Vijñāna*, which distinguishes it from all others (सर्वतोव्यावृत्तम्) giving it its individual character (व्यक्तीमात्रत्वम्) and which is definable by itself alone (स्वतन्त्रत्वम्). Thus, instead of admitting outside objects, they would

admit a whole host of subjective ideas (corresponding to those objects) presumably on the plea that the ideas alone are what are actually experienced. But by whom, if an abiding perceiver is not admitted? The *Ālaya-vijñāna* is after all, a *Vijñāna*, made up of the subliminal impressions of ideas perceived, and is momentary besides; so it cannot be the perceiver as well. To take it as such is admitting an absolute contradiction *viz* that of the subject becoming an object at the same time and in the same act, while it would have been more in accord with common experience which does not contradict itself if it were assumed that we are conscious of the outward objects as such through the ideas which reach beyond themselves. The idea in each case does not go beyond its object and is not felt as such by itself, irrespective of the object, because it cannot act upon itself.

14. It is undeniable that the 'parikalpita', the 'paratantra' and the 'pariniṣpanna' Svabhāva of the categories of the Buddhists appear to have a close similarity with the 'prātibhāsika' (superimposed), the 'vyāvahārika' (the phenomenal) and the pāramārthika' (the noumenal) reality (*Sattā*) of the Vedāntins. But here also the similarity is superficial. The Vedāntins never admit that *Sat* can ever be unreal, *Asat*, even in a prātibhāsika, state. It is not attributing reality to unreality (parikalpita) but imposing unreality on the reality, which is just its opposite. Prātibhāsa has no independent existence beyond the real which is an absolute unity; and however much we might deny the existence of all experiences, we can never deny the existence of the one conscious perceiver who denies the experiences.* The Bodhi or the ultimate knowledge—the store-consciousness of the *Vijñānavādins* is a composite principle—a collective *Vijñāna* which embraces the universe, while Brahman of the Vedāntins is a simple unity with all idea of plurality or compositeness excluded—for these would vitiate the conception of the Infinite

**vide* S. Bh on Br. Sut. II. 3. 7.

which can never be many or divisible. So, though there is some verbal likeness in the description of the ultimate principle between the two philosophers, their conceptions are fundamentally different. Asaṅga's characterization of the Absolute in his Mahāyāna Sūtrālamkāra VI. I., as—

न सन्न न चासन्न तथा न चान्यथा

न जायते व्येति न चावहीयते ।

न वर्द्धते नापि विशुध्यते पुन-

विशुध्यते तत् परमार्थलक्षणम् ॥

may be acceptable to the Vedāntin obviously with a good deal of reservation. Śaṅkara has made this clear in explaining Gīta XIII. 12 where Brahman is described as “न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते”. He remarks there that all words express their sense through their genus, action, attribute or relation. As Brahman has none of these, it cannot be described by any word. The only way of accurately describing it, would be by the negative method—“Neti Neti”—not so, not so—by showing not what Brahman *is* but what it *is not*.^{*} “It is beyond all that is known and all that is not known” (Kena Up I. 4). Śaṅkara says, “It cannot *depend on* knowledge, for, knowledge is its essence”, thus disputing the misleading view that the supreme principle of the Vedāntins is a logical abstraction which is simply the negation of the finite. In explaining the fourth state of the Ātman, Śaṅkara has very cogently contended that the Ātman in the fourth state is identical with and not different from that in the other three states ; and is by no means an empty nothingness. “This higher stage means that the infinite itself must be conceived not merely as that which the finite is not, but is that which includes and explains it, not merely as an indeterminate background of the finite, but as a self-determining principle which manifests itself in all the determinations of the finite *without losing its unity with itself*”†

*Br. A. Up. II. 3. 6., IV. 4. 22., IV. 5. 15.

†V. J. Kirttikar, Studies in Vedānta Ch. II. p. 22.

The subsequent ślokas of the Bhagavadgīta where the expression न सत्तन्नासत् occurs will also bear out this conclusion.† Apart from this, the Buddhist differs from the Vedāntin even in his approach to this ultimate principle. Starting from a common sense view of this ephemeral world, he denies an abiding character to any of his experience, and is hopelessly landed in a doctrine of *flux* from which he can hardly extricate himself and his attempt to build an eternal ultimate principle by an abstraction of a common factor of the imaginary subliminal impression from this *flux* leads him to innumerable inconsistencies. By whatever name he might call it,—Tathatā (suchness or essence) or a Śūnya (void), and however much he might clothe it with a positive indeterminate co-efficient, it is nothing but an empty abstraction. It is no wonder, therefore, that he nowhere describes this reality in positive language. The Vedāntin on the other hand begins with the permanently abiding subject of all experiences—the Ātman or self—whose existence, as the perceiver, cannot be gainsaid, and, reducing the dual conception of subject-object relation into a unity—which on account of the limitation of language can only be described negatively—propounds a Brahman which is all Thought and Being. Professor James has remarked—†

“Their very denial of every adjective you may propose as applicable to the ultimate Truth, (He, the self, the Ātman is to be described by ‘No ! No !’ only, say the Upaniṣads), though it seems, on the surface, to be a no-function, is a denial made on behalf of a deeper *Yes*. Who so calls the Absolute as anything particular, or says that it is *this*, seems implicitly to shut it off from being *that*—it is as if he lessened it. So we deny the ‘this’, negating the negation which it seems to us to imply, in the interest of the higher affirmative attitude by which we are possessed.”

In Brhadaranyaka Up. II. 3. 6., therefore, this ‘Neti

*Gīta XIII. 13-33.

†W. James, Varieties of Religious experience, p. 416.

Neti' has been explained as "there is no other ultimate than this"—it is "the Truth of all truth" (सत्यस्य सत्यमिति)—"the Prāṇas are indeed the truth, it is their (underlying) Truth" (प्राणा वै सत्यं तेषामेष सत्यम्). It can never be an empty abstraction. It is the positive ground of the universe—"the root on which", says Śaṅkara, "all this change—this mere signifying (things) by words—this mere nomenclature—this false appearance, like the illusory vision of a snake or the like in a rope, is superimposed,"* It is a metaphysical conception, not reached by logical abstraction,—a psychological experience based on the certitude of the self and attained by direct intuition, or aparokṣānubhūti, as Śaṅkara would call it,—a method described in Chapter II of this book. So it would be hardly justifiable to confuse the "Eight No"es of Nāgārjuna or the paramārthalakṣaṇam of Asaṅga quoted before with Gaudapāda's kārīkā, II. 32., which runs as follows—

“न निरोधो न चोत्पत्तिर्न बद्धो न च साधकः ।

न मुमुक्षुर्न वै मुक्त इत्येषा परमार्थता ॥”

“No destruction—no origination—none in bondage—none doing penance—none even seeking salvation—none indeed attaining it—this is the ultimate Truth.”

Śaṅkara explains this paradox by stating, “As no plurality exists the absence of Nirodha etc., is the ultimate truth” on the strength of the famous passages of the Upaniṣads e.g. यत्र हि द्वैतमिव भवति etc.,† and hotly contends that this does not lead to the doctrine of the void. Let us quote his own words—“On the extinction of the illusion, the non-illusory residuum that persists is proved to be the reality simply by reason of that very persistence.”‡ While the Buddhist's denial of the objective

*Bh. on Chh. Up. VI. 8. 4.

†For discussion of this and other similar passages, see Ch. III. pp. 87-88.

‡He further remarks, विकल्पयितुश्च प्राग् विकल्पनोत्पत्तः सिद्धत्वाभ्युपगमाद्देव असत्त्वानु-

“The perceiving being *ex-hypothesi* in existence prior to the perception can never reasonably be 'Asat'.”

world is to lead to a collection—a transient *flux*—of ideas, or to the void, the Vedāntin's denial of the world as it *appears* is to awaken in a higher real existence—the existence of the *real* substratum, the Absolute Brahman. The distinction between their positions is finely brought out in the following saying—

सौगतब्रह्मवादिनो विशेषोऽयं यदादिमः ।

ब्रूते सर्वस्य मिथ्यात्वं द्वितीयस्तदनन्यताम् ॥

“While the one posits the falsity of the universe, the other posits its non-difference from the Absolute.”

15. It might be urged in behalf of the Buddhists, that, if it is necessary, as Śaṅkara contends, in order to apprehend Vijñāna, to admit the existence of something outside Vijñāna, we should demand the existence of something else beyond both to apprehend the outside entity, and for that again, the existence of yet another and so on, and thus we are faced with a “*regressus in infinitum*.” It might further be argued that, if, in spite of the fact that Vijñāna is self-luminous, we require another Vijñāna to perceive it, then, both being exactly similar, no relation of enlightener and enlightened can subsist between them, thus making the assumption of a second Vijñāna at best superfluous. To the first point, Śaṅkara replies very cogently that there is no need of any double reflection in our perceptions. The Vijñāna, being objective, requires a perceiver. But the subject (Sākṣin) of the apprehension of Vijñāna requires no proof and is, in fact, incapable of being proved. The perceiver and the perceived are in their nature contrary to each other and the perceiving subject *qua* subject can never be turned into an object to come within the scope of that perception. The subject, however, is in itself certain and can never be denied, as it can neither be proved as it is itself the basis (āśraya) of all proofs and consequently evident before the action of proving.* So there is no *regressus in infinitum*. To the

* Vide S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 3. 7., also his introduction to Ait. Up. II. iv. सर्वमपि मन्तव्यं मन्तारमन्तरेण न मन्तुं शक्यम् * * * सर्वस्य योऽयं मन्ता स मन्तव्येति, न स मन्तव्यः स्यात्, etc., also his Bh. on Br. A. Up. IV. 3. 7.

second point, Śaṅkara's reply is equally forceful. He points out that the two factors of Bodharūpa and Svalakṣaṇa, urged by Dīnāga and Dharmakīrti, cannot be the content of one single apprehension, being of the nature of the perceiver and the perceived, even though the Vijñāna be like a lamp self-luminous. A lamp, as something *to be perceived*, must have the eyes outside it to perceive it. The Vijñāna, unlike the subject of the Vedānta, has origin, perishability, and plurality and other like attributes. It is an *accident*, while the subject of the Vedāntin is a *necessity*, and never requires, nor is capable of, proof, as it is self-evident and eternal. One who is to prove must precede the proof.

16. Against the argument that the perceptions of waking life need not have any actual external objects on the analogy of dream perceptions, Śaṅkara draws a difference between the two kinds of perceptions. Dreams are sublated while our waking life is not so. The distinction of dream objects or objects of illusion with empirical objects and Śaṅkara's general position with regard to Māyā or Avidyā have been previously discussed,* and we need not repeat them here. We should only remember that Śaṅkara is not at all an illusionist in the exoteric world, and when he draws an analogy of phenomenal objects with dream objects, he asserts some kind of reality even to the latter. Both Bhāskara and Keśava Kāśmīrin miss the point when they charge Śaṅkara with inconsistency in establishing reality of external objects against the Buddhist Idealism. It is one thing to say that there is no external object in waking perception because there is none in dream perception, as they are both analogous as perceptions, and quite another thing to assert that the objects in both kinds of perception are not ultimate,—only so far they are analogous. Śaṅkara warns the Buddhists against carrying the analogy too far, forgetting the nature of the analogues. Fire does not

*Ch. II. 38. and Ch. V.

become cool like water because they are analogous as elements. It will not do to overlook the very nature of the analogues. "A dream-face is only a remembrance, while seeing in the waking state is apperception. The distinction between remembrance and apperception is evident and is felt of itself ; for it consists in the fact that a person is separated or not separated from an object ; when, for instance, a beloved son is remembered, he is not apperceived, but we wish to apperceive him."*

17. The position that Vāsanās, subjective perfumelike remnants, and not external objects, explain variety in our cognitions is, according to Śaṅkara, begging of the question. For, these Vāsanās which derive their differentiation from the objects have their basis in the apperceptions of the objects. When you speak of the idea of a *ghaṭa* (jar), the idea of a *paṭa* (cloth), the idea of a *pradīpa* (lamp) as separate entities, you admit in a way the existence of these external objects, otherwise their ideas would be identical. If the differentiation be held to be anādi (beginningless) and irrespective of the objects, *regressus in infinitum* steps in without a supporting basis, abolishing all our worldly endeavours to make, or deal with the objects, without proving the non-existence of external objects. The positive and negative instances *viz.* the waking experience and the dream experience rather support the view that there can be experience of objects without Vāsanās, but there can be no Vāsanās without experience of objects. Moreover, Vāsanās are nothing but impressions (Saṃskāras) and there can be no impression of any kind without a supporting basis. But this is unavailable in the Buddhistic doctrine—the Buddhists having denied both the external objects and an abiding subject like the self to whom the Vāsanās must belong.

Section VI—The Sarvaśūnyatvavādins.

18. Lastly we come to the Śūnyavāda (doctrine of the

* *Vide* S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 2. 29. Deussen's Trans. in "the System of the Vedānta" p. 248.

void), which though chronologically anterior, is logically posterior to the Vijñānamātravāda. It pushes back the abstraction of the latter still further to the extreme point, denying reality to all experiences including Vijñāna. This extreme view appears to have started as a reaction against Sarvāstitvavāda and to have been systematized by Nāgārjuna before Asaṅga retraced a step by positing reality to the Idea. There is thus a good deal of agreement between these two schools of Buddhists; and, as we have shown above, in refuting the one, Śaṅkara has refuted many of the fundamentals of the other school also. This is why Śaṅkara dismisses the Śūnyavāda with a mere mention in his Bhāṣya on the Brahmasūtra.* To ascribe to him, a seeker after truth as he undoubtedly was, a prudential consideration of an astute politician, is, to say the least, extremely unfair. His own contribution to philosophy was to draw a mean between the absolute reality of the universe and illusionism, basing his observations fundamentally on the Upaniṣadic doctrine. His carefully-worded interpretation of the Upaniṣads bears ample testimony to the extreme caution he has displayed to steer clear of the Śūnya theory. In his Bhāṣya on the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,† for instance, he draws a parallel refutation of the Vijñāna and the Śūnya school and, in course of his arguments, says that "Be the objects of Vijñāna, *e. g.* jar and the like, mere privations or positive entities, the Vijñānamātravādin has to admit the positive nature of at least the Vijñāna which cannot be thought away as there is no reason to do so. By this, the voidness of everything is refuted, as also the position of the Mīmāṃsakas who hold that the self as the subject can be apprehended by the supreme reality," although he concludes by saying 'शून्यवादिपक्षस्तु सर्वप्रमाणविप्रतिषिद्ध इति तन्निराकरणाय नादरः क्रियते', "The Śūnyavādin's view being contrary to all proofs, no importance is attached to its refutation." These remarks prove beyond doubt that

*II. 2. 31-32.

†IV. 3. 7.

Śaṅkara never considered this doctrine "dangerously near" his own doctrine of Māyā. A little discussion of the doctrine will rather show the reverse to be the case.

19. The doctrine of the void* had already been extant in the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras and what Nāgārjuna did (in the 2nd Century A. D.) was to reason out a system which probably lay behind these Sūtras in his Kārikā to which he added a commentary of his own called Akutobhayā (or the fearless). The old doctrine of no self beyond the elements composing it was extended to all things (dharma-nāirātmya). Knowledge which follows from the scrutiny of things of common experience is shown to lead nowhere. The old conception of pratītya-samutpāda (paragraph 6 above) is revised and characterized by the eight No-es (paragraph 11 above). Its interpretation as a series of causes and effects is entirely rejected. The notion of origination is unsettled by subjecting it to the test of a negative logic. 'Nothing exists anywhere, whether we conceive it as born of itself or of another or of both or of neither'. 'To be born of itself' would imply that itself already existed. 'To be born of another' would mean that anything could come out of anything. 'To be born of both (itself and another)' is an absurdity and 'to be born of neither (no cause whatsoever)' is still more absurd. It means that the notion of causation, as also of the whole universe, is illusory. "The teaching is thus entirely negative. All experience is a delusion ; and the world a tissue of false things falsely related."† In the pratyayas or conditions (paragraph 8 above) there is no self-existing entity and, therefore, there cannot be any related experience. Thus there is no causal relation, which is read into the effect by association only. 'Effect is with and *not* with the pratyayas', says Nāgārjuna, 'pratyayas are neither without nor with effects.' Similarly 'neither of the non-existent, nor of the existent,

*Vide E. J. Thomas, History of Buddhist Thought, pp. 212-248.

†M. Hiriyanna's Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p. 220.

is there a cause ; for, if of the non-existent, of what is the cause, and if of the existent, why a cause ?' So the term 'cause' is a misnomer. So also, 'if consciousness (chitta or the group of chāittas) can exist of its own right prior to an object, why seek an object to prove its existence ? And if the object exist before the consciousness, how imagine a relation between an existent object and a non-existent consciousness ?' Thus the doctrine of causality is worthless. The formula, 'when *this* is, *that* is', has indeed no meaning as there is no real entity in so-called entities. The effect does not exist in any one of the conditions (hetu), nor in all of them. If from such conditions, anything appears which was not in them, the effect might as well appear from non-conditions. The preceding moment having disappeared in the effect, there is no cause. There is again no effect as it cannot be related as such to a cause of a prior moment. It is fruitless, therefore, to speak of conditions or non-conditions. Nāgārjuna never attempted to find a better concept for the cause. He was satisfied with showing the inconsistency of the current concepts. The view, however, is not inconsistent with the relative or provisional reality (Saṃvṛti Satya) of the common things of experience. They are intelligible and real from a practical point of view, but they fail to satisfy a metaphysical test, being self-discrepant. Behind everything inconsistent and unreal or void, however, there is an absolute reality (paramārtha Satya) which is neither conceived cosmically, nor psychically, but as a permanent attainable state,—attainable not by the rational methods but by direct intuition *i. e.* by the practice of concentration (Yoga). The Saṃsāra is unreal. Transmigration is also unreal. Compounded things, whose nature is arising and passing away, are neither bound nor released—nor is there a being so bound or released. Nirvāṇa is without Upādāna (grasping), but he, who thinks he shall attain Nirvāṇa if he is without Upādāna, holds a great false notion, for he believes in a real self (Satkāya). The limit of Nirvāṇa is also the limit of Saṃsāra, not the finest distinction is found between them ; there is no abandoning of anything

through Nirvāṇa, nor the ceasing of anything. Hence Nirvāṇa is the destruction of all false imaginings. Nirvāṇa, again, is neither existent, nor non-existent, nor both, nor neither; the reality of Nirvāṇa is beyond all conditions and can be apprehended in mystic intuition only. In spite of this extreme position of the Mādhyamika, its difference from the other schools is not very great. "According to all of them alike, common knowledge contains elements which are superimposed by the mind. Thus general features like cowness have no objective reality according to any of them and are entirely due to the nature of thought. In the Yogācāra school the illusory character is ascribed to the whole of the physical world. That is, scholastic Buddhism as a whole regards the greater portion of common knowledge as conventionally true. The Mādhyamika merely extends this principle to all experience."* The denial of self apart from the Skandhas, the Āyatanas and the Dhātus, the assumption of momentariness, the impermanence of everything except the Asaṃskṛta Dharmas (which are negative) are amongst innumerable other points where all the schools agree. Void has been said to be imperishable, immeasurable, signless, undetermined, non-accumulating, non-arising, non-originating, non-ceasing, non-passion and has been called Nirvāṇa, departure and Profound. The ultimately real of the mystic is Tathatā (suchness) according to both the Mahāyāna schools as we have noticed before. As the goal of his attainment, this is Nirvāṇa, and as the subject of his thought, this is the Buddha as the Dharmakāya (the body of the nature of things or Dharmas).

20. We have stated before (paragraph 14 above) how Śaṅkara differs from Mahāyāna Buddhists both in his conception of and approach to the ultimate reality. The Yogācāras do indeed retain in the ultimate analysis, as we have noticed, the fundamental concept of the void. But they have the advantage over the extreme Śūnyavādins philosophically by

*M. Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 220-221.

starting from a psychological stand-point. Nāgārjuna's refusal to admit reality even to the Vijñāna can hardly have any glamour for Śaṅkara, who differentiates his doctrine from the Sūnyavāda of the Mādhyamika by postulating a reality behind the self-discrepant world of experience and by identifying this cosmic unity behind the manifold world of phenomena with the unity of the subjective self of all experiences. Śaṅkara denies only 'names and forms' but not that which appears under their guise. "While Śaṅkara negates distinction (bheda), the Mādhyamika negates both distinction and the distincts (bhidyamāna)."* Śaṅkara's identification of the thinking subject with the Reality at the back of all empirical things makes the latter an immediate certainty. 'He, who denied it, would affirm it by the very fact of his denial.'†

21. Śaṅkara's view about the causal relation which Nāgārjuna denies is put forward logically in his commentary on Br. Ā. Up. I. 2. 1. Let us quote a portion of it : "The existence of both cause and effect before origination can be inferred. An effect which exists (in the cause about to unfold), appears only when the cause is present, and not in its absence. So also, in the case of the universe, the cause is inferred just as in the case of common things of experience *e.g.* the jar and the like. To take the absence as the cause on the ground that the jar etc., do not originate without destroying the lump of clay etc., is wrong ; because the cause here is clay etc. (and not its lumpness etc.). Clay is the cause of the jar, gold is the cause of the bangle and so on, not the special form of lump, as the jar, the bangle and the like are found in the absence of the form of lump. Mere clay or gold as cause might produce the jar or the bangle even without assuming the special form of lump. Hence the form of lump is not their cause. On the other hand, jar or bangle cannot be produced without clay or

**vide* Sarvarthasiddhih II. 20. (Vedānta Desika).

†'य एव हि निराकर्ता तदेव तस्य स्वरूपम्' S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 3. 7.

gold in some form. Hence these things as such are their cause, and not the forms (which are mere accidents). All cause, when about to produce an effect, first sublates its pre-established determination and then assumes a new determination which is the effect ; no single cause can have more than one determination at the same time. Sublation of the former determination of a cause does not mean its own destruction. The origin of an effect on the break of a form of the cause (*e.g.* of lump) does not establish the total absence of the cause before origination. But, as the clay etc., has no existence beyond the form of lump etc., how can the cause be said to persist ? Because the concept of clay persists in its product even though it has disappeared from the lump. The appearance of persistence cannot be said to be due to mere similarity. For, we actually perceive in the jar the constituent clay of the lump and draw the obvious inference (that the cause persists in the effect). Hence there is no scope for imagining a similarity. There is no point in the argument that disagreement between perception (as jar) and inference (as, clay) is itself contradictory, for, the inference depends on the perception ; and, if we accept the former argument, we can rely on nothing at all. If in all things momentary, we can form a judgment like 'that is this', and for the concept of 'that' in the judgment we have to rely on another 'that' and for this latter on yet another 'that', thus stepping into a *regressus in infinitum*, the concept of 'something similar to *that*' (which is itself unstable) proves false and hence there can be no rest anywhere. The concepts of 'that' and 'this' without an agent (of conception) cannot be related in a judgment. It cannot be said that they are related through similarity, for the 'that'ness and the 'this'ness are not on common ground. In the absence of a common ground, there can be no similarity. If it be postulated—that there be an *idea* of similarity even in the absence of similarity, we might as well hold the concepts of 'that' and of 'this' in the judgment to exist even in the absence of any content whatsoever. If the opposer concedes the point by saying, 'let no concepts have any contents', then

the concept of a concept becomes objectless. This cannot be seriously maintained, for, if all ideas are false, the idea of even falsity is unavailable. So the idea of identity in the judgment 'that is this' is not due to similarity. The cause actually exists before the origination of the effect." Śaṅkara maintains also that even the effect exists before origination. Only there is a veil which when removed brings the effect to light. We need not go into further details. This is enough to prove that there is a fundamental difference between Nāgārjuna and Śaṅkara.

22. Both Śaṅkara and Nāgārjuna agree that salvation is not attainable. It is an eternal state. But the agreement does not go any further. Nāgārjuna's Nirvāṇa is the knowledge that all knowledge is false, while Śaṅkara's mokṣa is the consciousness which is the basis of all relative knowledge which is real. Śaṅkara has tried to steer clear of the Śūnyavāda of the Mādhyamikas wherever he has found an opportunity by expressly pointing out the distinction in places where his doctrine might be confounded with that of the Mādhyamikas. A few illustrations will suffice. In his commentary on the Brahmasūtra (II. 3. 7.), he establishes that the self is not a transformation like the elements, and says if we take the soul as a product we would be accepting the doctrine of the void—the soul is not anything newly formed—it is self-evident—it cannot be thought away. Again in his commentary on Brahmasūtra (III. 2. 22.), the passage of the Br. Ā. Up.*, speaking of the two forms of Brahman, has been discussed, and, on the question whether by the 'Neti Neti' occurring at the end of the chapter, both Brahman and his two forms are denied, Śaṅkara remarks, "A denial of both is not reasonable, for then we come to the doctrine of the void. A denial of something as not the ultimate, can only be made on the basis of taking something as the ultimate, as the snake might be denied when there is the rope." Again, on Brahmasūtra III. 3. 53-54, Śaṅkara

supports the existence of the soul apart from the body, and, after fairly putting the case of the Mādhyamika, remarks, "if, on the ground of the absence of the soul in the absence of the body, it is held that the soul is of the nature of the body, why, on the absence of the soul even in the presence of the body, it should not be held to be of a different nature?" Thus in death, there is the body without the life-principle, in dreams the body remains motionless yet various experiences are gained. Hence Śaṅkara concludes that the body is only an accessory (upakaraṇamātram) to the soul and even as an accessory it is not of extreme importance (न च अत्यन्तं देहस्य उपलब्धावुपयोगोऽपि दृश्यते). On Praśna Up. VI. 2., Śaṅkara remarks, that "the Nihilist imagines a total absence of knowledge when there is nothing to be known." But by what will this absence of object be apprehended if there is no knowledge? Abhāva, according to the Nihilist, is an object of knowledge and eternal. If it is maintained, that an eternal knowledge not apart from this abhāva might be admitted, then as this void is of the nature of consciousness, its voidness is only a word, there is no voidness or relativeness of knowledge as such from the absolute standpoint. If to an absolute knowledge is given the name only of void, it does not harm us in the least. But if this void being an object of knowledge is apart from knowledge, then on the absence of the object, there will not necessarily be an absence of knowledge. To say that the object is apart from the knowledge but knowledge is not so from the object is mere word-splitting." In explaining the fourth state in the Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad, Śaṅkara says that "if this fourth state is of an entirely different nature from the other three states of Ātman, then on account of absence of any means of approach, either the Śāstra becomes meaningless or we have to accept voidness," and shows how in apprehending the fourth state no other proof or means is to be sought than the removal of the attributes of Antahprajñatā etc., which were mistakenly supposed to exist in the other three states in the one Ātman, the truth flashing simultaneously ; just as the rope is apprehended without any

further proof immediately on the removal of the mistaken idea of the snake, which comes about as a result of the knowledge of the substratum apart from the super-imposition. So also Gāṇḍapāda in his Kārikā III. 28. says—

असतो मायया जन्म तत्तु तो नैव युज्यते ।

बन्ध्यापुत्रो न तत्तु न मायया वापि जायते ॥

and Śaṅkara explains, an unreal object can never be born either through Māyā or in Truth,—a barren woman's son is never born truly or by Māyā ; hence the doctrine of void is far removed from reason. Again, in his introduction to chapter VIII, of the Chhāndogya Up., Śaṅkara remarks "The absolutely real non-dual Brahman devoid of the distinctions of direction, space, attribute, motion or product appears to the dull-witted as Non-being (asat or void." It is needless to multiply instances. In the face of these and other evidences, to suggest that Śaṅkara did not realize his own position or that of the Mādhyamika or of both, would be unjustifiable presumption.

Section VII—Śaṅkara's Nirguṇa Brahman as distinct from Sūnya.

23. What then is the nature of the ultimate reality—the Brahman *per se* (ब्रह्म केवलम्) according to Śaṅkara as distinct from the Sūnya. It may be represented on the one hand as the infinite Being presupposed in all finite existence and on the other as the absolute consciousness implied by empirical knowledge. It is, however, neither phenomenal Being nor empirical knowledge as they fail to represent it in its purity, for each of them has appearance superadded to reality. They reveal the ultimate but, like all empirical things. do not represent it truly. They are not apart from it, but cannot stand for it singly or in combination. Brahman-in-itself is, therefore, called Nirguṇa or indeterminate which does not mean that it is nothing, as is ordinarily assumed, but that nothing that the mind can conceive can actually be affirmed of it.

Whatever we think of, we think of as an object. It, therefore, cannot be affirmed of an element not presented to us in the form of an object. The familiar categories of thought are consequently inapplicable to Brahman. Hence no direct description of Brahman-in-itself is possible. But it might be indirectly pointed out with the aid of the appearances—for these appearances, which can never be independent, necessarily imply an ultimate reality beyond themselves. All relatives must point to the Absolute. Every percept and concept of the empirical world may, therefore, be made to indicate it. All objects reveal Being (Sat) by abstraction but the perceiving subject reveals both Being (Sat) and Thought (Chit)*. Hence the Upaniṣads teach the ultimate reality through the terms,—*Tvam* (as in *Tat tvam asi*) or *Aham* (as in *Aham Brahmāsmi*), denoting the subject. The explicit sense of the terms with their mutually incompatible attributes, in these propositions, is abandoned, as we have said elsewhere, and our mind travels beyond those attributes to the Nirviśeṣavastu, which is the ground of those attributes, to find the true import of the identity. Brahman is indefinable and unknowable according to Śaṅkara for reasons we have already stated, but it is not unrealizable. It is not altogether beyond the reach of words. For, to suppose so would be to take away, as Śaṅkara points out, the whole purpose of the Upaniṣads (शास्त्रानर्थक्यम्). Though granting that a negative definition is only possible of the Ultimate Reality, Śaṅkara, in consonance with the Upaniṣads, emphasizes the positive implication behind the negation. Negation in the Upaniṣads is only a preliminary to affirmation. The 'Neti Neti' of the Upaniṣads is of secondary importance to Śaṅkara—meaning only that the Absolute has not been conceived here objectively—as merely inferred from outer phenomena. He lays much greater emphasis on the Mahāvākyas which mean that the Absolute is conceived as revealing itself within us (स्वयं प्रत्यक्षम्). This totally alters the significance of the negative description giving

*cf. *Naishkarmyasiddhih* III. 100-103.

the absolute not only a positive but a spiritual character. It is no longer a contentless nothing but is something very real and not wholly outside the world of experience. The esoteric Brahman is the very truth of the exoteric Brahman and is immanent in everything that constitutes it. 'तत् सत्यम् सत्यम्', says the Upaniṣad, asserting that it is not the antithesis or negation of the Saṁgha Brahman, in spite of the negative description. Every aspect of experience, subjective or objective, reveals it. We seem to miss it because of the bewildering mass of appearances. We cannot, of course, grasp it as an object of knowledge. But there is the other way of realizing it by Anubhūti. We can know Brahman by being Brahman. Not that we *were* not it, but our knowledge was clouded by Māyā. The consummation of Upaniṣadic teaching is reached when the aspirant has learnt by long discipline to feel his identity with all that exists and at last, going beyond that state, loses sight of the objective world by his concentration and ultimately even of himself as such, and finds the conscious self only standing as the one Reality without a second, "whom the Vedāntists know as indeterminate, yet revealed in the many names and forms of the Universe—as one indivisible Absolute,"

“अविशिष्टमपर्य्यायानेकशब्दप्रकाशितम् ।

एकं वेदान्तनिष्णाता अखण्डं प्रतिपेदिरे ॥”

Kalpataru on Br. Sūt I. 1. 2.

This Akhandatā distinguishes the Vedānta, on the one hand, from the Sāṅkhya-Yoga standpoint, which admits a plurality of souls, a truly real universe, and a supreme Lord apart from these, as appears in Pañchadaśī VI. 228, where it is said,—

आत्मभेदो जगत् सत्यमीशोऽन्य इति चेत् त्रयम् ।

त्यज्यते तैस्तदा सांख्य-योग-वेदान्तसम्मतः ॥

and, on the other, from the Buddhism, where the emphasis, according to Śaṅkara, is wrongly laid on the negative aspect, leading to the inconsistencies stated above.

Section VIII—The Jaina doctrine—its special features.

24. We now come to discuss the Jaina doctrine which, in antiquity, is said to be older than Buddhism. Its special characteristic is its extreme caution against dogma of any kind, which culminates in Syādvāda (or the doctrine of "may be"). It means that the universe may be viewed from many angles and each angle of vision yields a different judgment, which, from an ordinary point of view, is a truism. It amounts to saying that men's judgments differ. But as a proposition of universal application, it lacks certitude; and as an uncertain (*anāikāntika*) theory of predication, as pointed out by Śaṅkara, it must recoil on itself.

25. The Jāinas are essentially dualistic, believing in two classes of everlasting things—spirit (*Jīva*) and non-spirit (*ajīva*)—the conscious and unconscious principles of the universe. The notion of *Jīva* appears to have been derived from its literal sense, 'that which lives or is animate—from an observation of the characteristics of life rather than from a metaphysical research after an underlying principle in individual existence.'* It stood rather for the life principle or the vital breath than for the soul in its original significance. But later it has come to mean the same thing as the self in other Indian philosophies. The number of *Jīvas* is infinite, all being alike and eternal. We need not go into details of their classification, which merely shows that there are *Jīvas* in different levels of development. The *Jīva*, according to the Jāinas, is both an enjoyer (*bhokṛ*) and an agent (*karṛ*). It is intrinsically perfect, characterized by infinite intelligence, infinite peace, infinite faith and infinite power; but its union with *ajīva*, which constitutes *Samsāra*, brings about an obscuration of its innate glory. The aim of life is to subdue the material element in Man and to shake off its evil influence so that the spiritual element in him might

*Professor Jacobi, *Jaina Sūtr*. Pt. I. p. 3n.

reveal all its excellences to the full. The category of ajīva is divided into Dharma (an element that facilitates motion in space), Adharma (an element of inertia), ākāśa (a third element of space), Pudgala (matter) and Kāla (time). They as such lack life and consciousness and are in this sense distinct from the Jīvas. Of these, time is infinite, having two cycles, the rising and the falling, like those of a revolving wheel. The other four divisions of Ajīva with the Jīva occupy space (pradeśātmaka) and are called *astikāyas*. Time is excluded from this category, because though it is, 'asti' (real), it has no kāya (extension). The term Dravya (or substance) is applied to all the six entities. Space is also infinite like kāla and is conceived of in two parts; the Lokākāśa, where movement and rest are possible, and the Alokākāśa, stretching infinitely beyond Dharma, Adharma and Lokākāśa. Pudgala (matter) possesses touch, taste, smell and colour, but sound is looked upon as its mode (pariṇāma). It is eternal and consists of atoms out of which emerge all things of experience including animal bodies, the senses and *manas*. These atoms, according to the Jāīna view, are all of the same kind, like Jīvas, but they can give rise to the infinite variety of things, so that the nature of matter is here conceived of as indefinite. Pudgala has, indeed, some inalienable features but, within those limits, it can become anything by qualitative differentiation. The atoms of earth, water, fire and air are derived and secondary and not primary and eternal as believed by some Vāīśeṣikas. The so-called elements are divisible and have a structure. By developing the respective characteristics of touch, smell, taste and colour, the atoms become differentiated,—in themselves they are indistinguishable from one another. Transmutation of elements, therefore is quite feasible in this view. Atoms diversified by the development of their special characteristics are the sources of the rest of the material world. Matter may thus have two forms—one simple or atomic and the other compound, called skandha, resembling the pañchīkṛta bhūtas of the Vedānta. In its analysis of the universe, Jāīnism, like the Vedānta, does not stop at the so-

called elements (which are four according to the Jāinas as to the Buddhists) but pushes them further to where no qualitative differentiation has yet taken place. But, while Śaṅkara establishes the ultimate stage as the monistic principle of Brahman, the Jāinas maintain at the last analysis an infinity of atoms. Matter is held not only as qualitatively indefinite but also as quantitatively undetermined. It may increase or decrease in volume without addition or loss. It is assumed that any number of particles of matter in the subtle state may occupy the space of one gross atom. Karman, which by its influx into Jīva brings on Saṃsāra, is a subtle form of matter. Śaṅkara has refuted the atomic theory of the Vāiśeṣikas on the ground of an impossibility of conglomeration in grosser forms. The same objection holds good in the case of the Pudgala theory where the atoms have not even a distinguishing trait for each of the four elements. There is no reason why one kind of qualitative differentiation should come into existence in preference over others, and produce one kind of matter. It is almost an accident.

26. These atoms are said to be the abode of souls. Not only the bodies of the plants and animals but the smallest particles of the four elements are surcharged with souls. This hylozoistic theory is said by Professor Jacobi to be "a characteristic dogma of the Jains, which pervades their whole philosophical system and code of morals."* According to Śaṅkara, the soul having thus limited pervasion and definite dimension in a body must be regarded as non-eternal like the jar etc. The particles of the soul being confined within the limits of one body cannot be conceived as infinite. Again, accretion or depletion of particles of soul to occupy larger or smaller bodies would bring about mutability; and whatever is liable to mutation being non-eternal, the soul would be non-eternal like the skin. The variable size of the Jīva in its empirical condition is a remarkable feature of Jāinism. It is like a lamp that can illumine

**Jaina Sut.* (S. B. E.) Pt. I. p. xxxiii.

the whole of the space enclosed in a small or big room in which it is placed.* The non-spatial character of the Jīva as such is evidently affected by its association with matter. The unalterable nature of Jīva is thus denied by the Jālnas. Śaṅkara points out that the accretions and depletions cannot be of the essence of the soul if, by their addition or subtraction, the soul as such is not affected. In spite of the variability of the soul's dimension if, in its successive paryāyas, the soul is held to be permanent in a way like a flowing stream, the Jālnas will be in no better position than the upholders of the doctrine of *flux*. Moreover it is unreasonable to suppose that the ultimate dimension of the soul is of one kind and the initial and middle dimensions are of another kind. The soul must either be atomic or all-pervading in all circumstances.†

27. Unlike Śaṅkara, the Jālnas maintain that the two classes of entities are absolutely inter-dependent,—each implying the other. Neither spirit nor matter can be fully understood by itself. The Jālna view may hence be described as relativistic. From the infinite number of Jīvas and Pudgalas that it recognizes, it may be viewed as pluralistic as well. These two factors show only a first analysis of common experience. The Jālnas have not pushed them to their logical conclusion. Thus relativism, as pointed out by Śaṅkara, must lead to the Absolute. Plurality also must lead to unity. The infinite number of Pudgalas, in Jālnism, are all of the same kind. So also are the Jīvas. Their empirical distinctions are explained by the qualitative differentiations in the case of matter and by Karman which is a subtle form of matter in the case of the Jīvas. But the atoms as such or the Jīvas as such are indistinguishable from each other of the same class. Hence the intrinsic difference assumed to exist between one atom and another or between one Jīva and another is only in name. The necessary implication of Jālnism in this respect is, there-

*Sarvadarsanasamgrahah p. 45. (Madhavacharyya).

†vide S. Bh. on Br. Sut. II. 2. 34-36.

fore, a single spirit encountering a single material substance. Again, as in this dualism, the two principles are not independent of each other as in Śāṅkhya, but are mutually interdependent, a further synthesis would reduce the two into an Absolute, which owing to its essentially dynamic character, would develop the distinctions of Jīva and Ajīva within itself. But Jāinism stopped far short of this—its primary aim being the perfection of the soul rather than the interpretation of the universe. As a metaphysics, therefore, it did not attain the perfection of the Vedānta.

28. Jāinism, like Pūrvamīmāṃsā, deliberately rejects the idea of a God creating the Universe. Any need for creation clearly militates against the idea of the Most Perfect. Anthropomorphic conceptions of God, as are generally formed in theistic systems, bring Him down to the level of man. Jāinism, on the other hand, raises man with his inherent powers fully manifest to the level of God. God is here only a synonym for the soul at its best. To be the Ideal Man is paramārtha. J. Jāīni in his outlines of Jāinism (p. 3.) claims that 'Jāinism, more than any other creed, gives absolute religious independence and freedom to man. Nothing can intervene between the actions which we do and the fruits thereof.....As my independence is great, so my responsibility is co-extensive with it. I can live as I like ; but my choice is irrevocable and I cannot escape the consequence of it.' Śāṅkara does not raise a voice against this solid foundation of its ethical code.

29. The Jīva in association with the Ajīva is kept down in bondage (bandha) by a pouring in of a subtle material fluid (āsrava) in consequence of the association. This inlet might be closed by certain disciplines (Samvara) and the fluid that has already found access into the soul might be driven off by penance (nirjaras) when the soul rises upwards to the top of the lokākāśa—the highest realm of the blessed, 'with the full blaze of omniscience' in him and there rests in peaceful

bliss forever attaining freedom from bondage (*mokṣa*).* The ethical causes of the inlet and outlet of the fluid are *pāpa* and *punya* (sin and virtue), which terms replace *dharma* and *adharma* which are used, as we have noted before, in a technical sense in Jāṇa Philosophy, meaning two normal functions of space.

Section IX—Jāṇa view about Knowledge and Reality—The 'Syādvāda'.

30. Like Śaṅkara, the Jāṇas hold knowledge to be the very essence of the Jīva. The Jīva can know everything unaided directly and exactly as it is, unless there are obstacles in the way. External conditions, *e.g.* the eyes and light are useful indirectly. Knowledge results automatically when the obstacles are removed through their aid. The fragmentary character of the Jīva's knowledge is explained to be due to the obscuration caused by *Karman*. The Jāṇas thus invoke the aid of *karman* to explain empirical thought, as Śaṅkara assumes *avidyā* for the same purpose. The identity of empirical thought with the Jīva is emphasized though some difference is conceded at the same time. The Jīva and its experiences in this sense constitute a unity-in-divergence. Perfect knowledge being of the very nature of the self, fragmentary or indistinct knowledge is a lapse. Accordingly, though senses and *manas* are aids to knowledge in one sense, they also mark the limitation of Jīva in its mundane existence. The extent of enlightenment varies inversely with the obstacles. Self without Jñāna or Jñāna without self is, however, inconceivable—a view which is distinct from that of the Buddhists. When all obstacles are broken down, there is full enlightenment (*kevala jñāna*) for the Jīva who then apprehends all things vividly and truly. This absolute knowledge or knowledge in its purity is called *mukhya pratyakṣa* or immediate perception, arising without any external aid of the senses and the like—an appre-

**Sarvadarsanasaṃgraha*, p. 40. (*Madhavacharya*),

hension in which there is no place for doubt, as opposed to *Sāmvayahārika pratyakṣa* or common perception.

31. Reality is characterized by *utpāda* (birth), *vyaya* (death) and *Dhrāuṃvya* (persistence).^{*} It is thus both stable and unstable, for, though eternal in itself, it might have modifications which come into being and pass out of it. A *Jīva* in its embodied conditions has beginning and end, but as soul itself it is eternal. The changes or modes of the *Jīva* are known as *pariāyas* which come into being and persist for at least one moment before disappearing. Thus the minimum duration of empirical objects is two *kṣaṇas* as opposed to the *Kṣaṇabhanga* in Buddhism. Mutability is an aspect of the immutable according to the *Jāinas*, *utpāda* and *vyaya* being attributes of the *Dhruva* substance. The idea of reality is dynamic as in Buddhism, but still there is a gulf of difference between the two doctrines. The Buddhist repudiates the constant element, and recognizes the change, which is, therefore, a change of nothing, *i. e.* it accepts the many but denies the one, while *Jāinism* admits both, defining reality as one-in-many. The many as such are distinct, but they are also identical in as much as they are all of the same substance. When experience vouches for the co-existence of unity and diversity in the same real substance, there can be no contradiction.[†] This is at the root of the doctrine of *Syādvāda*, which implies that the nature of reality cannot be completely expressed by any one of the many possible viewpoints, for, in its concrete richness, it admits of all predicates. Every judgment with regard to it is, therefore, conditional—absolute affirmation or negation can only be erroneous. It is not necessary for our purpose to examine the background of this doctrine, for, we are not concerned with the question whether its formulation was justified or not. We are here to appraise its value as a metaphysical doctrine.

^{*}उत्पाद-व्यय-ध्रौव्युक्तं सत्—*Tattvarthadhigama Sū. V. 29. (Umasvati.)*

[†]प्रतीयमानं वस्तुनि विरोधासिद्धेः, *Prameyakamalamartanda* p. 93.

32. From this standpoint, its weakest point is its disjunctive dialectics with the sevenfold mode of predication, which stops at giving us several partial views together, without any attempt at a proper synthesis. The Jālnas appear to think that reality is so complex in its nature that any attempt to describe it directly or once for all would necessarily fail. It is only possible to make it known through a series of partially true statements covering the whole ground of thought without committing ourselves to any one of them exclusively. Thus the Jālnas evolve the sevenfold formula or Saptabhaugīnaya whose steps are as follows :—

- (1) स्यादस्ति (may be, is).
- (2) स्यान्नास्ति (may be, is not).
- (3) स्यादस्ति नास्ति च (may be, is and is not).
- (4) स्यादवक्तव्यः (may be, is inexpressible).
- (5) स्यादस्ति चावक्तव्यः (may be, is and is inexpressible).
- (6) स्यान्नास्ति चावक्तव्यः (may be, is not and is inexpressible).
- (7) स्यादस्ति नास्ति चावक्तव्यः (may be, is and is not, and is inexpressible).

A thing has existed and will always continue to exist, but its particular form, in which it appears now, is not its whole existence. So to assert that 'it is', is not the whole truth. Nor to say that 'it is not' (in any other form) is the whole truth. Hence the first two steps. As the modes or forms vary although the substance remains the same, we might as well assert the third alternative that 'it is and is not'. The opposition of these contradictory predicates is reconcilable in successive moments but not so if they are simultaneously applied to the same object in the same mode. So we come to the fourth step—it is expressible as neither. This amounts to saying that reality from one standpoint is inscrutable. These four steps practically cover the whole range of possible alternatives. But to appear to be absolutely exhaustive, three more steps are added by combining the fourth step with the other three, leaving no room

for the charge of dogma in any form. The Jāinas do not deny an enduring factor in our changing experience, but its modes, according to them, are variable. There is no self-identity in things as is hastily assumed and nothing is really isolated. According to Jāinism, therefore, permanence and change are equally real. Reality being infinitely complex, knowledge of it is erroneous when partial and it is correct when complete. This is, at best, a doctrine of extreme caution which makes any proper conclusion doubtful. With these premises, as pointed out by Śaṅkara,* there cannot be even a determinate knowledge of the form that 'the essence of all things is variable'; for, the so-called determinate knowledge—so far as it is a *Vastu* (reality) must be submitted to the dialectics of 'may be'; so also the knower and the known will have to be classed under existence and non-existence in the sevenfold way. How can a system be propounded, asks Śaṅkara, when the means of knowledge, the objects of knowledge, the agents of knowledge and the resulting knowledge itself are all alike of an indeterminate form? Then again, if reality is indescribable, it should not be described, and if you can describe it, how can it be indescribable? Ratnaprabhā, in commenting on Śaṅkara, further elucidates the point thus: "Whatever *is*, is always and everywhere, *e.g.* Brahmatman; it may not be objected that then there would be no need for an effort to attain it, for, effort is possible even for such a thing through error of non-attainment. Again, whatever *is not*, is so invariably *e.g.* the horn of a hare. The manifold universe is distinct from both (*sat and asat*). Hence the doctrine of oneness (एकान्तवादः) is proper and not the doctrine of manifoldness (अनेकान्तवादः)." The implication is that a thing, which is called *sat* in one form, cannot be *asat* in the same form; and if it is *asat* in another form, then the other *form* is *asat* and not the thing itself. So this Universe is to be taken as a unity in its real aspect. Further, this avaktavyatā of realities, in Jāinism, should not be confounded

with the *anirvachanīyatā* of *Māyā* in Śaṅkara's doctrine, according to which *Māyā* is not a real entity being an adjunct of Brahman, the only reality acknowledged by Śaṅkara; yet it is not an absolute nothing as it gives rise to empirical experiences, as we have explained in detail in the previous chapter.

Section X—Erroneous Cognition in the Indian Systems.

33. In examining the diverse systems of Indian Philosophy, we have noticed that their main divergence pivots round their epistemology and particularly round the central problem of error or erroneous cognition. To have a comprehensive and comparative view of the different theories of *Bhrama* or error, we recapitulate them in one place, as this will give us an idea of the merit of the systems themselves. Five broad classes of theories of error, according to the mode of its apprehension are recognized by Indian Philosophers. These are :—

आत्मख्यातिरसत् ख्यातिरख्यातिः ख्यातिरन्यथा ।

तथानिर्वचनख्यातिरित्येतत् ख्यातिपञ्चकम् ॥

To illustrate :

(1) The Yogāchāra school of Buddhism explains erroneous cognition as consisting in the *Vijñāna* itself, which externalizes itself in the form of the erroneous object *e.g.* silver where there is only nacre. All determinate cognitions of objects as such are, according to the *Vijñānamātravādins*, erroneous. This is *Ātmakhyāti*. As there are no objects outside of *Vijñāna*, the error also can only be in the *Vijñāna* which thus becomes the perceiver as well as the perceived.

(2) The Mādhyamika school explains error as apprehension of a non-being (*asat*). When silver is cognized where there is no silver, the object of the cognition is *asat*, which admits of cognition, as it is vouched for by experience. This is called *Asatkhyāti*. But as the non-existent can have no distinc-

tive features, it can, like the barren woman's son, never be experienced.

(3) The Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas hold, therefore, that error is non-apprehension. There are two factors in the cognition of error,—first an indefinite perception, when the nacre is perceived in a general way as *idam* ; and secondly, a recollection of silver which is not apprehended as such, but is identified with the perception. In such cases where a (white) conch is seen yellow through jaundice, there are two distinct perceptions—one, of the conch in a vague general way, and *the other*, of the yellowness in the bile—and the latter perception is not apprehended as distinct but is identified with the former. According to the Prābhākaras, however, all experiences are valid, and error consists in experiencing imperfectly, and not invalidly, the imperfection being in non-discrimination and not in mis-apprehension. This theory, which is known as Akhyāti, is perfectly consistent with Realism. If the objects of all experiences are real, the fault can legitimately be ascribed to apprehension only. But, if there are two distinct cognitions in the process, there is, as pointed out in the Bhāmatī, as much justification for the cognitory units and, consequently for their objects which are real, to appear as distinct, as there is for them to appear as identical. Rāmānuja, as we have seen, accepts this Akhyāti theory with some modifications, by which he introduces a Satkhyāti alongside of the Akhyāti. According to him, there is, in an error, a subtle truth which, under normal circumstances, is overlooked ; there is thus no absolute error in errors. The Jāīnas, too, explain error by the obscuration of knowledge brought about by the limitations, and maintain that error as such does not exist. The unsatisfactory character of these explanations has already been dealt with and there is no need of repetition. Earlier Sāṅkhyayoga view of error also resembles that of the Prābhākara school. According to it, error is lack of apprehension (Akhyāti), not mis-apprehension (Anyathākhyāti, see below) as in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika ; and

the way to avoid it is to acquire sufficient knowledge. The most important point to remember in this explanation is that when the error is discovered, nothing of what was cognized before, is sublated. What is given in experience is a fact although it may not be the whole of the fact. Thus, there is no subjective element in error. "Truth does not supplant, but only supplements what is given in the so-called error."*

(4) The Nāīyāyikas hold that nothing but reality can be presented to us in our experience, and hence error is confounding one reality with another, the absent reality being within the range of our perception through an extranormal (alāūkika) sense-relation brought about by the experience itself. This is known as Anyathākhyāti. The attempt of the Nāīyāyikas to avoid Asatkhyāti is too subtle, and hardly serves the purpose. The Viparītakhyāti of the Bhātta school of Mīmāṃsakas is akin to this theory with only this difference that it maintains the relation between the two entities, e.g. silver and mother-of-pearl in the example, as *asat* (unreal) and recognizes no extra-normal sense-relation. The Sāṅkhya Sūtra accepts this view and modifies the earlier Sāṅkhya-yoga view in a fundamental manner by admitting an ideal element in error. Thus a positive relation, which is *asat*, is admitted, unlike the earlier view of the system, between the two items of error, e.g. the silver and the nacre. This view is, therefore, sometimes called as Sadasatkhyāti,† for, in it, error shows not only what is given (the *related*) but also what is not (the relation). Some dualistic Vedāntins, while admitting the "elsewhereness" of the illusory object, contend that, in cases of erroneous experience, the object like silver as presented is absolutely *asat* (non-existent) *within the sphere of the substratum like nacre*, on the strength of the sublating cognition which vouches for the fact of no silver *here* at any time, past, present or future. They thus modify the Anyathākhyāti to suit their system in

*M. Hiriyanna's *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* p. 291.

†Sāṅkhyapravachana Bh. Vijnana Bhikshu V. 26 and 56.

a way which is on the border line of *Asatkhyāti*. In any case as one reality never exists in the form of another reality, accommodation to *Asatkhyāti* has to be conceded in some form or another—the *asat* element being admitted either in the relation between the two objects, as by the *Bhāttas* and the later *Sāṅkhyas*, or under the cover of an extra-normal sense relation as in the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system.

(5) To avoid the difficulties noted above, *Śaṅkara* propounds the theory of *Anirvachanīyakhyāti*. In this view, error consists in experiencing a relatively real object which, as we have seen before, can neither be described as *sat*, nor as *asat*, nor as both. The error here is a cognitive complex consisting of two factors ; one being a *vṛtti* of the *antaḥkaraṇa* in the form of 'this' (*idam*) in the example, caused by direct contact of the nacre with sight ; and the other being a *vṛtti* of *avidyā*, in the form of 'silver' (*rajatam*), brought about by a partial veiling of the nacre and by a revealing of it as silver, as explained in the previous chapter, through similarity between the objects and some pre-cognition of the knower. The object of error, in this view, is *real* in a relative sense and conterminous with the error, coming into existence with it and lasting as long as it lasts. The *avidyā*, here, has a specific external object as its basis (*e.g.* nacre)—the silver, to which it gives rise, comes into being out there—spatially determined, and is not a mere idea. Thus there is no need for accommodation to *Asatkhyāti* ; and there need be no confusion between *Śaṅkara's* view and that of the *Sūnyavādins*.

Section XI—Views on Error in Modern Western Philosophy.

34. Let us now examine the views of some modern western philosophers on this question of error.

(1) In *Bradley's* theory of judgment, and of truth as coherent experiences, there are some obvious difficulties. *Bradley*

identifies thought with existence. He says—"It is only by misunderstanding that we find difficulty in taking thought to be something less than reality."* In his anxiety to avoid the notion of "floating or mere psychical ideas," he runs to the opposite extreme of placing them in objective reality itself. As a consequence, error to him is real, though but partially, and reality as well as truth has 'degrees'. Reid suggests a modification of this view, holding that thought is not identical with existence, but that 'it is *our* apprehension of existence',† so that truth and error must be in the apprehension, though it is not clear in which part of our apprehension of existence, truth or error exactly lies. His view, however, seems to border on the Akhyātivāda, as he says, in another place, "Knowledge, rather, is just the relation of *mind* to the *object*, and truth and error qualities or properties of the cognitive relation."‡ Western Idealists conceive of the experience of the Absolute as an immediate, felt inner experience, and, as there are no objects external to the Absolute, they quite fallaciously assume that the subject and object are epistemologically one. Śaṅkara, as we have seen, steers clear of such a wrong notion and avoids describing knowledge of the Absolute in anthropomorphic ways. Again, as pointed out by Reid,§ if coherence is the character of truth primarily, and if truth is a property of the act of judgment, or of the experiencing side of an asserted experience, there is no intrinsic reason why a single judging or an experiencing should not, by itself, be quite true. Coherence is but an external test of truth, and not the cause of its attainment. 'If mediate cognition', says Stout, 'could only be mediated by cognitions which are themselves mediate, knowledge could never get a start'.¶

*Appearance and Reality, p. 162.

†Ivide Knowledge and Truth, L. A. Reid, p. 25.

‡Knowledge and Truth, L. A. Reid, p. 58.

§Knowledge and Truth, p. 29.

¶Mind 1908, Immediacy Mediacy and Coherence, p. 33.

(2) As against all idealism, American New Realism holds that there are no subjective facts as opposed to objective ones either ontologically or epistemologically. Ontologically the self is a cross-section of the existing universe to which the organism responds. The function of the organism is to reveal objects already there. Epistemologically, the subjective is not a set of private entities which are opposed to the real world. The content of knowledge or consciousness is the very things themselves and is in no way subjective. Error is not a contradiction between subjective and objective entities but all error is objective, it belongs to existence. It is a great mistake to suppose that truth and falsity belong to beliefs. "There would be no sense", says Prof. Montague, "in calling an act of belief as either true or false. It is always because of what is believed that the belief is true or false."* This view is very much akin to the *Asatkhyāti* we have noted above. We may urge against this view that knowledge without a subjective element is unthinkable, and truth and error must be held to be qualities of something which is in part subjective. For, if we think of error as applying to things only, we must end by denying all distinctions between truth and error, one of which, as a set of facts, is as good and as real as the other. Prof. Holt's view that error is contradiction and that it is to be found in the external world is also not maintainable.† No single proposition is contradictory, it may not be a statement of the fact. Thus the proposition that 'this lotus is blue' (when it is not so) cannot be by itself contradictory, unless placed alongside the correct statement of the fact. It is, therefore, not logical contradiction on which error is dependent, but ultimately upon reality. Śaṅkara, as we have seen, was conscious of the limits of logical statements, and his '*abādhitatvam*' (non-contradiction) never referred to them. Truth, error, contradiction—are, according to him, properties of the relation between a unique

*New Realism, p. 256.

†New Realism, p. 364.

object, which is not merely an idea though a creation of mental beliefs, and an independent reality.

(3) Prof. S. Alexander differs from the American New Realists in his insistence upon the existence of a mental act. He re-introduces the psychic factor which the Americans seek to eliminate. Illusion, according to him, arises in perception through the mind's interfering with objects and distorting them. It is the distorted 'perspective' of the relevant bit of reality. When a yellow rose is erroneously taken as white, he says: "Owing to some defect in the erroneous observer, whether of sense or of carelessness or of haste, instead of seeing the colour which is before him in the reality, the yellow rose, he as it were squints at reality as a whole, and his mind is compresent with white instead of yellow. One eye sees this rose in its shape; the other sees not the yellow within the shape but a white. Thus two new realities have come into being; one is the union of the real yellow rose with the mind of a true observer; the other is union of reality, though not merely this particular reality of the yellow rose, with the mind of the observer who squints or has a twist in his mind. That reality is the erroneous belief; it is the artificial product of the mind and reality as a whole." Thus, to him, for whom the only real is the objective world of Space-Time, the product of 'mind and reality as a whole' must be something other than reality,—it must be in some sense subjective. There is thus a remarkable similarity between his view and that of Śaṅkara. But Prof. Alexander, as a realist, is not consistent with the notion of "the perspectives", by which a distinction is drawn between a mere cross-section of reality and the knowing of it which is the knower's act. He somehow holds the perspectives to be objective, to be non-mental. He says: "An error is concerned with a piece of reality which is outside and does not belong to the given reality, though, as we saw in the case of the colour of the rose, the reality it deals with (the white colour) belongs to a class of realities (colour) which has its representative

(yellow colour) within the given reality."* He does not maintain that truth is just the assertion of an undistorted perspective. As a thorough-going realist, he says: "True propositions belong to the reality; false ones introduce elements from elsewhere. True propositions are thus also real; but their truth is different from their reality. True propositions cohere, or rather false propositions are incoherent with true propositions and are rejected by us."† The coherence of truth, according to him, "comes into existence through the conflict and co-operation of many minds."‡ Thus, in this view, there is an 'act' of the mind apart from the agent, which is inconceivable, the mind being conceived of as a continuum of acts—a view hotly contested by Śaṅkara in his examination of the Buddhistic theory. The self appears to be something more than its successive 'enjoyments'. Again, as 'compresence' implies two separate factors, mind, as the single mental act in respect of the object, cannot be said to be compresent with the object, for, then, there are not really two separate factors, the mental act not being an entity beyond the object, according to Prof. Alexander. Nor is it conceivable that the contemplated object is compresent with the continuum of conscious processes or acts, which is one's biography.

(4) The monistic theories of truth examined above do not sufficiently recognize that, in knowledge, there should be at least two factors—the subjective and the objective. Without this recognition, no satisfactory account of truth can be given; and error offers insoluble problems. Bertrand Russell's correspondence theory of truth, on the other hand, takes its stand on the existence of these two factors, mental and real. No theory of truth is, according to him, satisfactory unless it fulfils the three desiderata, viz.,—(1) it must allow truth to have an

*Space, Time and Deity, Vol. II. pp. 255-256.

†Space, Time and Deity, Vol. II. pp. 252-253.

‡Space, Time and Deity, Vol. II. p. 258.

opposite, (2) it must make truth to be a property of beliefs, and yet (3) it must make it wholly dependent on the relation of beliefs to things.* Mr. Russell believes that the nature of truth must be some kind of correspondence of things in a judgment to other things independent of the judgment. We shall confine ourselves here only with judgments based upon perception and with errors in those judgments, as this will give us a comparative view of Russell's theory with the Khyāti theories of Indian Philosophy. According to Mr. Russell, whatever is directly perceived by the senses is true, even when the judgment about this perception is erroneous. It is only our belief about this 'sense-datum' or 'sensum' or 'essence' that can be false. No thing, as it is, can be the direct objective of our knowledge. When we see an apple, we actually see certain forms and colours, and, by touch, we might feel its smoothness, softness, etc., and from these we entertain certain beliefs which together make up our perception of the apple. The thing apple—the whole complex—can never be directly known to us. But it becomes indirectly an objective of our perception, because it is only a series of innumerable sense-data, or an invariable and extra-sensual cause of such a series.† Perception has, therefore, two aspects, first, the direct knowledge or acquaintance of the sense-datum and secondly a belief in the existence of a relation between the datum and the object. The first is beyond the province of truth and error, and the second is within it. "The truth or falsehood of a belief always depends upon something which lies outside the belief itself."‡ Mr. Russell, however, himself points out an obvious difficulty in accepting this view unthinkingly viz. "If truth consists in a correspondence of thought with something outside thought, thought can never know when truth has been attained."§ But

*The Problems of Philosophy, p. 193.

†C. D. Broad, Phenomenalism.

‡B. Russell, Problems of Philosophy, p. 189.

§The Problems of Philosophy. 190.

he does not accept the coherence theory to evade this difficulty. Although coherence is an important test of truth, yet only correspondence with fact, he remarks, constitutes the nature of truth.* Now if the objects of judgment are mental and if they have to correspond with a *non-mental* real to make the judgment true, it is impossible to know when the judgment is true, for any relation with the nonmental can never come within the scope of knowledge. The fact is the real is not so absolutely nonmental as Mr. Russell supposes. Correspondence is in no better position than coherence in describing the real nature of truth. It is also only a test of truth. In perception, verification of the beliefs implies that when we have direct perception of certain sense-data, we expect certain other sense-data in connection with 'the objective reference' to exist, and if these are found actually to exist, the beliefs are true. But, to find if this second set of sensedata exists, shall we not have to depend on other beliefs? Thus there will be a *regressus in infinitum*; and, hence, correspondence, like coherence, can give us no certitude about Truth. Truth and error, in the last resort, must be admitted to be verifiable only by introspection. According to Mr. Russell, there are three factors in belief: (1) an act of belief, (2) a content of belief, and (3) a reference to a fact, called its objective reference. Belief, true or false, refers to the same fact which is its objective. "You may believe the proposition, 'To-day is Tuesday', both when in fact to-day is Tuesday, and when to-day is not Tuesday. If to-day is not Tuesday, this fact is the objective of your belief that to-day is Tuesday. But obviously the relation of your belief to the fact is different in this case from what it is in the case when to-day is Tuesday."† Content of the belief is absolutely distinct from the objective or fact to which it refers. The content is mental and is always a present fact. Truth is the relation of correspondence between the content and the facts. When there is

*The Problems of Philosophy, p. 193.

†Analysis of Mind, p. 272.

no such correspondence, *i. e.* when the content is different from the objective, there is error,—a view akin to the *Anyathākhyāti* of the Indian Philosophers. The analysis of the mental state in perception of an external object into two factors, *viz.*, direct acquaintance and belief is hardly felt by introspection. The process of perception rather appears as one immediate integral whole. Even if it be admitted that there are two factors, they coalesce in such a way as to give to the combined whole a distinctness from each and from the mere summation of both. Again the datum is not really beyond the province of truth and error. It is at least partly responsible for the error. The knower has in fact no choice in determining the character of the error. The appearance of the datum at a certain angle, or in dim light, or by virtue of some defect in the sense organ, plays a great part in the formation of the belief. In case of doubts when we deliberately choose one alternative and find that alternative to be false, we are not surprised, for we know, we are ourselves responsible for our choice. But not so in the case of error ; there, as soon as the truth flashes in us through further evidence, we feel as if we are awakened from a dream over which we had no control, we feel that the datum, at the time of our mal-apprehension, appeared before us in a false garb and thus caused us to see it as something other than itself. Thus, even if we admit, there is a belief apart from knowledge in perception, it does not depend on the free will of the knower ; on the other hand, it appears to be determined by the datum. If it be maintained that the sense-datum has no hand in the formation of the belief but that wish, hope, fear or prejudice in the mind of the knower leads him, it may be unconsciously, to hold the belief, we must remember that these functions of the mind do not stop with merely bringing the belief into existence but go on creating a new sense-datum in consonance with the belief. Sense-datum is transformed from time to time through various causes. The noise of the snoring terrier before and after the source was known, in James' Psychology is an illustration in point. That it does so, as an effect of

simple volition, might be illustrated by James' wellknown staircase figure which looked like a staircase or an overhanging cornice at will. Again, as the apprehending minds and organisms of different knowers are qualitatively different, the content or datum in each particular case must be qualitatively as well as numerically different. From these and other similar illustrations, it is impossible to hold with Mr. Russell or the critical Realists, that, in the apprehension of the snake or the rope, in the illustration of Sankara, we first come in contact with a content or sense-datum or character-complex 'without external relations or physical status'—and then interpret it as a snake or a rope. From the very start, we have the experience either of the snake or of the rope.

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A STUDY OF ŚĀṆKARA

CHAPTER VII

Conclusion

1. In the previous chapters it has been our endeavour to present the philosophy of Śāṅkara to the reader in a systematized form. Śāṅkara wrote no special book on his system. In fact no Indian Philosopher ever did like that. Although his life had but a brief span of thirty-two years according to tradition, they have been crowded with work. His master mind worked and worked hard all the time writing commentaries on the important philosophical treatises of ancient India and through those commentaries developing his masterly system. He has written commentaries on all the important extant Upaniṣads. He has written a commentary on the Gītā and lastly he has written a commentary on the Brahmasūtra. In all those commentaries there is traceable one outstanding thought current which has for its theme the proposition that the phenomenal world of perception is not a duality as it looks but is intrinsically an abstract unit. His thoughts have not thus developed in a systematized form. They have developed incidentally in course of his numerous commentaries on those philosophical books. Our task has thus been rather a complicated one. We had to trace the background of his thoughts and then the sources of his inspiration and then to arrange together his ideas in such a manner as to present them to the reader in the form of a well-knit system. How far those efforts have been successful will be best left to the reader to judge. These efforts will be sufficiently rewarded if they help to clarify the ideas of his system to some extent to the general reader.

2. We are now at a stage where we can with profit make a brief *résumé* of all that we have passed through so far. We

have traversed a lot of ground. We should now pause and recollect what we have experienced so far. It is useful. It helps proper assimilation and places the various component parts of the system in their proper setting. That will help us to get a consolidated view of the whole system.

3. The outstanding thought current in Sāṅkara's system is certainly the doctrine of Identity, his ruthless intolerance of any theory advocating pluralism of any form. Is reality of the nature of one or many? To this question his straight and unflinching answer is that it is of the nature of one; there is no room for plurality here. It is possible to think of a synthesis of these opposite lines of thought, one supporting monism and the other pluralism. Several renowned Philosophers have attempted a solution of this problem in this line. But Sāṅkara will not join their company. They conceive reality as a complex form of unity where the one being has many component parts. He is, however, opposed to such a view of reality. According to him reality is of the nature of one, it is a simple unit, it has no component parts, it is most abstractly one. That is in short his doctrine of Identity, the nucleus of his whole system. It is true he says, that in the perceptual stage reality appears as many. But that is distortion, that is appearance. The manifold world of perception is reality proper, it is not outside of it, it is not different from but it is identical with reality proper. How then do we explain this perception of plurality? That is the work of Māyā—the distorting agency which makes the abstract unity of reality appear as the manifold world of perception. The world of perception is not *evolved* from reality proper but it is identical with it. The appearance as many is due to defective perception. Correct this falsifying error of perception and you get the proper view of reality as it is.

4. We could in this connection refer to two other prominent features of his system. One is about his conception about

the nature of reality. What is the nature of reality? Is reality of the nature of mind or matter? That is another fundamental question of Philosophy. The rank materialist will try to derive everything from matter. According to him reality is of the nature of matter. Even thought is conceived as a by-product of matter. On this point also Śaṅkara has given his answer. Here again he is straight and unwavering. His simple answer is that reality is of the nature of thought. He is an extreme idealist. Reality is of the nature of idea, of thought, it is *Vijñāna*. He rejects any view that would bring matter as an explanatory factor in the scheme of the universe. Here also he is on the side of the extreme view that reality is ideal, it has nothing to do with material. Here also a reconciliation is possible as between the rival claims of matter and mind for recognition as the essential stuff of reality, by recognizing the claims of both. It may be said that reality is partly matter and partly mind. In fact special systems of Philosophy have been developed in these lines by some renowned Philosophers. We may, for example, refer to the grand conception of Pan-psychism of the great German Philosopher Paulsen. According to him there is a mental counterpart for each physical component of reality and a physical counterpart for each mental component. It is endless parallelism between mind and body. The system of Bergson is another such attempt at reconciliation. He frankly recognizes both matter and memory as constituents of reality. But Śaṅkara would not go that way at all. He is inexorably uncompromising in his attitude. In his system mind alone has place and not matter. Reality is of the nature of mind, it is not material.

5. The third outstanding feature of his Philosophy is his intense rationalism. He is an advocate of free rational thinking. In fact on this point he goes further than the ordinary Philosopher. He does not stop content with merely advocating freedom of thought or thinking according to the tenets of reason alone. Religion may have a function to minister to

certain peculiar needs of the human mind. It may not be possible for man to outgrow the needs for what we may call the essence of religion. Still religion as we find it at present is not an unmixed blessing. It has been the cause of the creation of artificial division in mankind,—it has led to many a bloody strife between different sections of humanity. These are, however, its minor evils. The greatest evil is that it clogs reason. It encourages the growth of dogma and superstition, and bans the cultivation of free thinking. It is not necessary to multiply examples to convince the reader of the truth of this charge. We refer to the great tragedy, in the early history of civilisation, of the death of Socrates. Religion had not yet taken a firm root in the mind of the civilised man and yet a man of the calibre of Socrates had to be sacrificed at its altar as he had the hardihood to teach young men to think freely and rationally. When Christianity took a firm root in the soils of Europe it exercised a baleful influence in a more devastating form. Rational thinking was practically stifled to death and what is called the “dark age” was ushered in. That is the greatest evil of religion. A man who can hold out the banner of free thinking against the decree of religion is more than a great Philosopher ; he is a great and fearless hero. Such a hero was Bruno, the Italian who gave up his life for the sake of free thinking. Sankara is a greater hero of this order. To be able to properly appreciate the significance of this observation we should recall in mind the condition prevailing in India. India is a religion-ridden country. It has seen the rise of many religions. It is the birth place of that complicated type of religion which holds in its octopus-like tentacles all possible forms of religious belief. We suffer from a surfeit of religion. Religion took its root in the soil of India from the early Vedic times. After that, by a continued process of development, we saw more of religion in India, until, at about the time Sankara flourished, Hinduism had already assumed almost the complicated state in which we find it at present. In spite of such an atmosphere of religion about him, inspite of the stifling effect of the conserva-

tive spirit of religious teachers of India in those days, Sankara had the boldness to declare his allegiance to free and rational thinking alone and not to the dogmas of religion. In this respect he comes within the same group to which we should assign martyrs to the cause of rational thinking like Socrates and Bruno.

6. Sankara, however, went further than this and in this respect is probably greater than they. He not only advocated the cause of free rational thinking, but made this the *summum bonum* of life, the divine mission of every Philosopher. To the Philosopher who can think rationally, he would not assign the minor role of a votary at the altar of religion earning piety by strict observation of rituals. For him is the nobler mission of searching for and realizing truth in life—of realizing that ultimate truth which is the quest of every Philosopher. The study of Philosophy, the search for the knowledge of ultimate reality is naturally the highest mission of life, the greatest religion of man. For the ordinary man there may be a pragmatic use of the ordinary ritualistic observations which we call the constituents of religion. For a man who can think, all this is superfluous and should by all means be discarded. This is the substance of his teaching. It is not necessary here to record the practical advantages of such a conception of religion which identifies Philosophy with religion. This conception marks him out as the greatest votary of knowledge.

7. We have thus described in a short compass the three outstanding thought currents of Sankara's system. We can now advantageously attempt a study of the special features of each. This will help us to appreciate him better.

8. The doctrine of Identity is indeed unique in the world of philosophic speculation. It avoids the acceptance of the demands of pluralism, advocates an abstract form of monism and yet in a way is able to maintain that this world of manifold

perception is rooted in reality. The many is identical with the one. The many does not arise out of one but is the same as the one. The many is not unreal, it is as much real as the one, it is its perception as many which is false, which is an illusion, which is the result of faulty perception. In fact we cannot trace out a parallel solution anywhere in the history of Philosophy. It is literally unique. Usually his system is compared to the systems of certain outstanding Philosophers like Plato, Kant, Bradley and even to Buddhism. But the similarity is in most cases rather apparent than real. It touches on some inessential parts of his system and not on this central theme. A brief discussion on this point will be sufficient to establish this proposition and may be conveniently taken up here.

9. The doctrine of Identity is an answer to the problem of Philosophy which asks : Is reality a unit or is it composed of many parts ? Its answer is that it is an abstract unit. It concedes that empirically we perceive a plurality but this perception, it declares, is a false perception. Plato's answer to this question is different. He advocates a monism no doubt but he also concedes a place for component parts. The highest conception to him is God but under it there is a hierarchy of universal ideas. Plato thus advocates a monistic Pluralism. It is a complex monism which concedes the existence of component parts within it. Kant's similarity with Śaṅkara lies in the acceptance of the proposition that empirical perception does not present to us reality in its true form. Both accept this proposition but they base it on different grounds. Śaṅkara ascribes it to an objective power called Māyā which acts as the dualising agency in perception. Kant says that what is presented to us is the joint product of two separate types of thing-in-itself (*das Ding an sich*). There is the thing-in-itself behind the object which gives the sense-data while there is the other thing-in-itself behind the mind which gives the form or categories. Their joint product is the phenomenal world of perception. Thus Kant does not give a direct answer to the question in issue at all, although it may

be said that, by implication, he does not advocate abstract monism. In the same manner an analysis of the theory of Bradley will show that the similarity that can be traced in the two systems is rather superficial. Both agree to assert that the empirical perception is a mere appearance, it does not present reality to us as it is, but presents it in a distorted form. But Bradley does not at all advocate the theory of abstract monism. Each individual act of perception is a part of reality to him. Reality proper in his conception is all possible experiences conceived together as coming within the range of a single act of perception. By implication it appears that he goes in for the theory of complex monism where there is unity in multiplicity, where the many are linked together by an all-embracing one.

10. It is a commonplace idea in Indian Philosophy to denounce Śaṅkara's Philosophy as anti-vedic and as a disguised form of Buddhism. It is not within the scope of our present discussion to refute the first part of this charge although it may be incidentally stated here that it is an absolutely mistaken idea, for, Śaṅkara's system draws inspiration from the cream of the Vedas. We shall briefly point out here the utter irrationality of the conception that his doctrine of Identity is similar to the Buddhist conception of reality. There is no doubt a superficial similarity in that both say that the empirical world of perception is not what it seems or appears. But that is said in different senses. Buddhism says that there is no permanency in reality, what we get is short-lived separate existences which by succession give us the appearance of a continuity of being. We can refer to a very apt analogy from the present day world. We may refer to the Cinema show in this connection. We seem to see a continuous moving picture, but the whole process is made up of showing innumerable detached pictures one after another. Here we perceive a continuity but in reality it does not exist. It is the same in our empirical perception according to Buddhism. Śaṅkara on the

other hand does not accept this theory at all. He believes in permanence. Reality according to him is a permanent entity. Empirical perception is not faulty where it shows continuity, but it is faulty where it shows plurality.

11. It is only necessary to reaffirm very briefly what has been the theme of special chapters in our previous discussions. The doctrine of Identity has been anticipated in the Veda, its seeds are traceable in the Veda. We would request the readers to remember all that has been said in the first chapter of the book. Pantheism and the unity of being have both matured into definite conceptions in the Veda. From the discovery of divine manifestation in every seat of power in nature, the Vedic seers feel the need for a monotheistic concept where Gods by turn are recognized as the seat of supreme power. Ultimately this groping through what Max Müller calls henotheism lands him into the concept of pantheism. The whole universe is ultimately realized to be rooted in one God. It is not necessary to multiply examples here; it will be sufficient if we refer to the contents of the *Puruṣa Sūkta* in this connection. Here we get both monism and pantheism. We may further note that even the concept of *Māyā* which Śaṅkara raises to the pedestal of an objective force in the shaping of the phenomenal world of plurality is not foreign to the Veda. It has been used in the Veda in various contexts in different *Sūktas*.

12. What was a mere concept in the Veda developed into a mighty thought current in the *Upaniṣads*. The concept of *Māyā* which is the foundation of the doctrine of Identity took roots in the *Upaniṣads* and gradually developed into a grand system. This has been the special subject matter of our treatment in the fifth chapter of the book. We shall not, therefore, repeat all that we have said there. That is not necessary. We may refer to the various passages of the *Upaniṣads* that have been quoted there. We may note that

there is an attempt to distinguish between the two aspects of the Absolute. What we get in the plane of dualism has been sought to be distinguished as an appearance in contrast with what the Absolute is as it is in itself, devoid of division, devoid of any perception but glowing as a self-luminous entity alone in its mighty grandeur. Śaṅkara took up the conception from there and by the magic touch of his powerful pen developed it into what has been our endeavour to picture within the pages of this book.

13. With regard to the other great problem of Philosophy Śaṅkara again takes up an extreme position. This problem touches on the question of the nature of Being. There are two possible extreme answers. Being may be sought to be explained exclusively in the terms of matter. That is materialism. Similarly Being may be explained exclusively in term of spirit. That is Idealism. Śaṅkara unhesitatingly accepts the second view and asserts that ultimate reality is of the nature of subject without any object.

14. Idealism is a doctrine which is almost as old as Philosophy itself. In India, except in Buddhist Philosophy, no other parallel system of Idealism can be traced with the Vedānta Philosophy. In the west there are notable parallel systems of Idealism to which we can make reference.

15. Among systems which advocate Idealism as opposed to materialism we can distinguish two types: subjective Idealism and objective Idealism. In subjective Idealism the Philosopher starts with a bias for the subject and almost overlooks the independent reality of objects which he reduces to the position of ideas in the mind. It cannot, however, effectively overlook the universal character of the perceptibility of the objects and to explain for this has to conceive of a supermind which forms the repository of the ideas which are said to be the basis for the perception of objects. The Berkeleyan system

and the Yogāchāra school of Buddhism both apply this same contrivance. The objective Idealist on the other hand is willing to concede the reality of objects as much as of the subjects. He establishes the superior claim of Idealism by trying to show that both intrinsically are of the nature of spirit, both are of the same stuff as ideas. The Idealism of Schelling and the Idealism of Hegel both belong to this class. While both these classes of Idealism have similarity to the Idealism of Śaṅkara in one respect, they can be distinguished from the system of Śaṅkara. They all have one thing in common namely that they hold that reality, objective or subjective, is of the nature of spirit as contrasted with matter. Spirit is the essential element of reality and not matter. On the other hand Śaṅkara's doctrine is marked both from subjective Idealism and objective Idealism by a profound difference. It can be placed under neither of these classes. Both subjective Idealism and objective Idealism posit an object or its counterpart although they try to paint it as of the nature of spirit. The object is conceded all the same as a necessary constituent of reality. Śaṅkara's Idealism, however, is of a more extreme type. He will have nothing to do with any object. The object is not an essential part of the universe, it is not rooted in reality as it is, but it is an appearance. Reality as it is has no division as subject and object. It is an indivisible unit and this unit is not only of the nature of spirit but it is positively of the nature of a subject although it has no object to perceive. That is Śaṅkara's conception of the doctrine of Identity.

16. In advocating this peculiar type of Idealism, Śaṅkara is traversing no new path. Here also he follows the footsteps of the seers of the Upaniṣads. He does so in a stronger sense than in unfolding the doctrine of Identity. There the idea was rather in an undeveloped form in the Upaniṣads and it underwent a regular shaping in the hands of the master thinker. Here on the other hand we find that the conception of reality

as having not only the nature of spirit but also that of the subject is completely developed in the passages of the Upaniṣads. It is not necessary to quote here all the various passages of the Upaniṣads which bring out the truth of this proposition. That is already available in a previous chapter in which we treated this subject in detail. It will be sufficient if we refer here to the teachings of Yājñavalkya to Māltreyī as we get in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. There Brahman is painted as a unity which has the character of a subject but has no object to perceive. This characteristic of a subject is so much a part of supreme reality that it never sheds it, for, the analogy is drawn that he is a Perceiver by pre-eminence and this capacity to perceive can never vanish as it is imperishable, (न हि द्रष्टुर्दृष्टे विपरिलोपो विद्यतेऽविनाशित्वात्). Śaṅkara simply reaffirms this doctrine.

17. It only remains to point out that the third great characteristic of Śaṅkara's system is also taken from the Upaniṣads, the inexhaustible storehouse of all lofty philosophical thoughts. The Upaniṣads take their rise in an age when religion had already taken a strong hold in the mind of man in India. Elaborate ritualism had been developed, imposing sacrifices and *homās* were a commonplace affair in those days. In contrast with this ritualism and faith in the divine emanation of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads strike a new note altogether. They proclaim there is knowledge and knowledge. Knowledge that is useful in our practical life is knowledge of an inferior type. While knowledge for the sake of knowledge alone which dedicates itself to the search for ultimate reality is knowledge of superior order (परा विद्या). The Vedas, the Purāṇas, the Itihāsas all belong to that inferior order. Man's *summum bonum* is the quest for this superior knowledge. In this ideal of life, morality, religion and philosophy are identified. A life dedicated to the search for ultimate truth is morally the ideal life, on the plane of religion the highest religion, and philosophically the best possible quest. It is this lofty idealism of the Upaniṣads that finds a resuscitation nearly a

thousand years after in the bold attitude by Śaṅkara which discards religion as superfluous for a man devoted to philosophical contemplation.

18. We now close this study with our reverence for the master thinker of India, the Great Śaṅkara, who died young in years but ripe in wisdom—who demonstrated in his short span of life that renunciation of desires could go hand in hand with vigorous activity for the good of the world.

प्रपञ्चमुक्तमुक्तानां शङ्करो ब्रह्म-मौक्तिकम् ।

शङ्करः स्यान्मुमुक्षूणां ज्ञानमार्गेषु शङ्करः ॥

Of the pearls of mankind free from bondage, Śaṅkara is the biggest pearl. May Śaṅkara be helpful to the seekers of liberation in their path of knowledge.

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*The figures indicate pages. 'f' denotes footnotes. • stands for the word that heads the article. *misprint corrected.*

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